taly and Germany—By JOHN STRACHEY

DECEMBER 10, 1935 15c

new Masses

A Cable Dispatch by JOHN L. SPIVAK

"We Want the Jews to Come!"
"Germany Needs Jewish Money!"
"They Will be Received with Open Arms!"

Nazis' Olympic Chief Speaks

"We Will Call Out the Police to Protect Them!"
"It Would Be a Great Blow to the Games if America Stays Out!"

n Turns to Murder—By BRUCE

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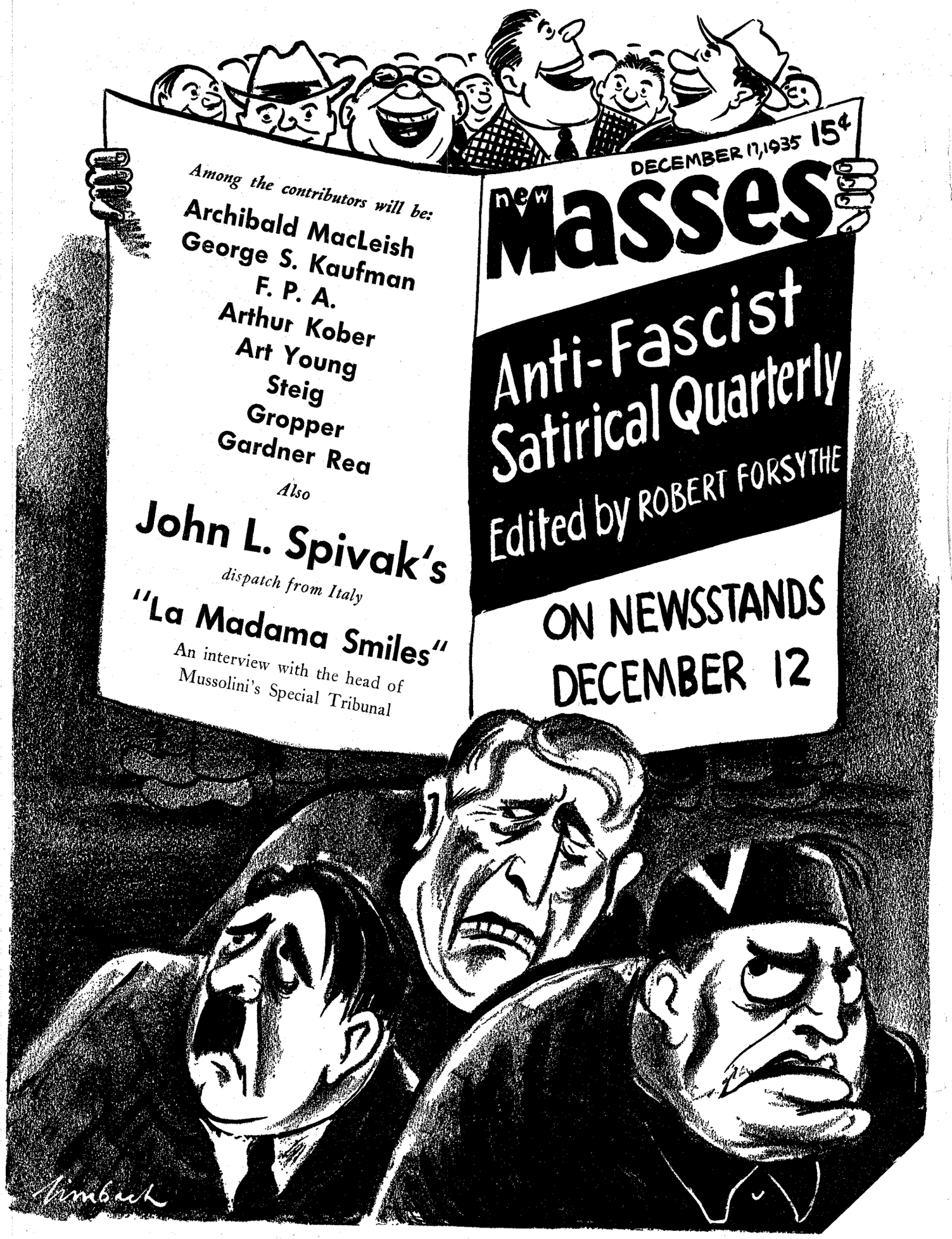

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New Masses

DECEMBER 10, 1935

F. D. R. Opens His Campaign

MR. ROOSEVELT'S speech at Atlanta turned out to be a hodge-podge of admissions and major misstatements. Undoubtedly it was designed as the opening note of his re-election campaign. He flatly stated that the peak of government spending was over, in line with his announced plan of shutting off federal relief for the unemployed. His statement that he saw "clear signs of a revival of material prosperity" was made too close to the city of Macon to deceive his hearers. For only recently the F.E.R.A. published its findings about that city: that when federal relief was stopped and the city unable to provide it, hundreds of men and women were made shelterless and ransacked garbage cans on the city's streets for stray bits of food. Roosevelt's boast that the New Deal has largely succeeded in abolishing child labor was made almost simultaneously with the official announcement of the National Child Labor Committee that today all the gains made in the past few years in eliminating child labor have been lost. The President said that the "average of our citizenship lives today on what would be called by the medical fraternity a third-class diet." To change this condition, he said, "we would need to put many more acres than we use today back into the production of foodstuffs for domestic consumption"—yet it was Roosevelt who initiated the "plow under" policy of curtailment.

"He's Just Heard That Fellow Spivak is Beginning Again, Ma'am." *A. Redfield.*

ROGER W. BABSON, an old-line economist, has just issued a statement declaring that the American standard of living at present is declining with no signs of stopping the decline. At every turn facts dispute Roosevelt's assertions, except when in a burst of candor he concedes a situation too obvious to conceal; for example, that the country faces "the fact of the continued unemployment of many million persons" or that "the masses of the American people have not got the purchasing power to eat more and better food." In general, the speech was designed to enlist the support of business men opposing the New Deal by promising not to burden them with any new taxes and pledging a reduction of federal expenditures to cut the national deficit. Roosevelt may be disappointed, however, if he expects to capture this support. For while corporation earnings, based on a representative survey, increased 40 percent for the first three quarters of this year over last year, captains of industry are chafing under the minor restrictions put on them by some of the New Deal legislation through which they believe their profits have been less than what they hoped for.

The Olympics Fight Goes On

THE basic issues raised by Nazi exploitation of the Olympic Games have never been squarely faced by any authoritative sports body in the United States, thanks to the tactics of Herren Goebbels and Sherrill. It was Goebbels who three years ago gave the controversy a still-spinning fillip by dubbing it "the Jewish question." And it was Sherrill who defined the scope of the matter by securing certain pledges which deal with the rights of German Jews to compete on the German Olympic teams. This meretricious concern for a few available contestants while ig-

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noring the plight of numerically more significant Nazi victims has served to sidetrack official approaches to the crux of the matter. A showdown is expected at the annual convention of the Amateur Athletic Union which will take place at the Hotel Commodore in New York City this weekend. These pledges will once again be the basis of discussion and may be utilized by the Brundage faction to evade the implications of surrender to fascism. The entire Olympics controversy has followed two distinct lines of thought formally. Sports bodies throughout the world can deal only with the legalistic question, "Have the pledges been met?"; while unrestricted consideration exposes the vicious intent of these pledges, which were at all times inadequate as a criterion to reconcile Nazism and the Olympic ideal. Advance assurances by the American Olympic Committee indicate that a goodly number of less nimble-witted delegates will find that the leavening of the Nazi team with the presence of one (.5) Jewish athlete purges the Hitler regime of its long history of war against all that the Olympics were intended to symbolize.

WHATEVER else happens at the A.A.U. convention, the issue must now be met. Once again the argument will be advanced—"Sport for Sport's sake!" and an effort will be made to preclude study of the merits of the case. This controversy will add to the meager annals of the metaphysics of bourgeois sport. What we are witnessing is no accidental difference of opinions. Sport is a vulnerable point in modern culture. As the chief cultural possession of the common man in democratic countries, sport differs from feudal and fascist equivalents. Democratic sport emerged with the growth of the great democracies in the nineteenth century and many of the ethical and social ideas of these democracies are contained in the very language of the times, fair play—justice; teamwork—social cooperation. In short, it is precisely because of the inherent democracy of sport that fascism uproots it. Fascism cannot afford the germ of an alien ideology which is ingrained in the nature of sport. So that the athletics of fascism are a reversion to feudal traditions, with emphasis on military formations, fighting, victory at any cost, etc. It is worthy of note that ardent exponents of military training in the colleges of America have always reiterated their opinion that such training was a desirable form of sport.

REGARDLESS of what happens at the A.A.U. convention, the struggle between the two types of sport and their adherents will continue. It can never be sufficiently emphasized that the worst violation of culture which fascism inflicts is the compulsion to accept the unacceptable, to accommodate contradictions which hurt the brain. John L. Spivak's cabled story in this issue of THE NEW MASSES reveals the intellectual degradation of one important Nazi sports official, in former times an ardent sportsman and inspiration to youth of the type of the classical German pedagogue. Himself beyond the Aryan pale, Theodore Lewald has bent every effort to achieve the success of the Nazis' Olympic project, even when his duties include bewildering self-delusions and apoplectic rejection of known truths.

The Front Populaire IS France

THE bluffing arrogance and bullying violence of the French fascists who style themselves "fiery crosses" are directly proportionate to the emptiness of their so-called program and the silliness of their noble Fuehrer, Colonel Count Casimir de la Rocque. But they do not impress the French people. Those in this country who perceive a parallel between the internal political situation in France today and that of Germany in 1932 are misled by surface appearances and do not know the essential facts. Unquestionably, the Croix de Feu have grown in numbers in the past year; the most extravagant estimates give them today some 350,000 members; but their new recruits come from the ranks of those who favored their "doctrines" from the start. Despite their slavish imitation of Hitler's tactics, despite lies and threats and millions spent on propaganda and attempts at bribery, they have utterly failed to win or even to reach the masses. Neither unemployed nor veterans, neither workers nor peasants, neither civil servants nor small business men, nor even the Catholic labor unions, have swallowed the bait. And what is true of these noisiest of the fascist leagues is even truer of their competitors, with whom they are eternally rowing. The Croix de Feu are a white guard of militant bourgeois schoolboys masquerading as a veterans' organization. The French Solidarity gang, originally financed by Coty, perfumer and would-be French Hearst, is a mob of Algerian huskies recruited for hire from North Africa's lumpen proletariat. The Dorgères agrarian fascists call themselves a peasant party, but are in reality a clique of titled landowners, mistrusted and fought by the agricultural population, the vast majority of whom are identified with the various left parties composing the Front Populaire. And the Patriotic Youth are, like the League of French Action, royalists disavowed by the pretender to the throne, who, seeing the way the wind blows in Hungary, Italy, Germany and Austria, is not powerfully hipped on fascism. And the notorious Lebecq, ex-representative of the public-utility interests in the Paris municipal council, who tried to capture the National Union of ex-servicemen for fascism, only got himself licked for his pains at the elections of last May by the famous scientist Rivet, candidate of the united Left.

THE government could, of course, if it had the will and the guts, wipe the earth with LaRocque and the rest of them. But it fears, favors and encourages them, because it and the fascists are marionettes in the hands of the same capitalists. The true character of the Laval cabinet was revealed in open parliament on the very night that it went before the chambers, by Marcel Déat, the young neo-Socialist deputy. "You pretend," he shouted in the premier's face, "to be a national government. You are nothing but a de Wendel government. You pretend to represent and do the will of the French people. But you know and the people know that what you really represent is de Wendel's Bank of France and his trust of armament makers, and that your government has been constituted at his dictation to do his will." There was no retort or disavowal from the ministerial benches. The charge was so unanswerably true. It has been true ever since. That is why Laval squirmed at taking action against Mussolini until the mass of the nation represented by the Front Populaire forced him to it. That is why he keeps putting off the ratification of the treaty with the Soviet Union and holds parleys with Hitler, though he knows that he is playing with the destiny of France. That is why at home he has inflicted on the masses the murderous decree

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laws, though he was too intelligent not to be aware that deflation would reduce, along with the people's standard of living, the state's revenues, instead of effecting economies. And that is why he flirts with the fascists and can't make up his mind to disarm them.

THE Front Populaire could chuck Laval out of office any day. It is biding its time, not only because it prefers to force him to do the nation's will in internal affairs as it has already made him obey it in foreign relations, not only because it wants to give him enough rope—as it gave Doumergue a year ago—till his decree laws discredit him and the clique behind him, but chiefly because it needs a little more time to consolidate its own unity so that it can go before the country next May with a definite program and obtain a clear mandate from the people. No one in France has the slightest doubt but that, were the elections to be held today, the Front Populaire would win a sweeping victory. The kept press admits it when it makes a pretty distinction between "the legal France," that is to say, the left majority, and "the real France," that is, the two hundred families who own and exploit the country. That is why the fascists and the reactionaries who finance and abet them, try by all the means in their power including murder, to bring discord into the Front Populaire and woo the Radical Socialists after accusing them a few months ago of all the crimes in the calendar, and seek to win the masses by offers of thin soup for the unemployed thickened with indigestible fascist demagogy, and hope to escape the nightmare that frightens them by leading the country into a European war. They know better than anyone else that the longer their tool Laval continues to govern, the surer becomes the triumph of the Front Populaire at the coming elections because they know that the union of the Left, running all the way from the Communists and the Socialists to the republicans and democrats of the Radical Socialists, is not a party but, short of an insignificant handful, nothing less than the united people of France.

Lewisohn's Folly

LUDWIG LEWISOHN'S abusive reply to James Waterman Wise's article "Are Jews Communists?" in a recent issue of THE NEW MASSES, carries in it a warning to American Jews that Mr. Lewisohn can no longer be looked to for the guidance he has furnished in the past. Lewisohn not only displays an ignorance of what is going on in the world but also a callousness to social injustice rivaling that of his employer, William Randolph Hearst. It takes an insulated mentality to say that there are no fascists in America. But that is what Mr. Lewisohn wrote in The Jewish Examiner of Nov. 22. It is colossal folly to say that Jews should dissociate themselves from the fight against fascism because Communists are leading that fight. And that in essence is another of Lewisohn's profundities. Aside from lumping Communism with fascism, Lewisohn stated that the attacks on labor and the restrictions of liberties in America are "more or less normal" in a democracy. This must be very comforting to thirteen million unemployed, to the peonized sharecroppers of the South, to Mooney and Herndon, to the Jews and Negroes who are suffering from a double weight of class and national discrimination. Lewisohn in the past has impressed the world as having an able mind seemingly devoted to the truth. The truth now is that Lewisohn is lost.

The Frame-Up Completed

THE Supreme Court of North Carolina has upheld the lower court's sentence of five Burlington mill workers to fifty-seven years in the penitentiary. The charge is dynamiting—by now, a traditional charge against militant strike leaders. McNamara, Mooney, the Modesto victims—scores of workers have been labelled "dynamiters" by owners anxious to be rid of worker opposition. In Burlington, N. C., the owners arranged to have a stick of dynamite thrown against a textile mill at which workers were on strike. The dynamite was thrown against that section of the mill containing obsolete machinery. It bounded off the outside wall and exploded; the damage did not exceed twelve dollars. But the explosion is what counted. Six men, prominent in the textile union and militant leaders, were charged with dynamiting and five were convicted—with the aid of the usual machinery of stool-pigeons, paid witnesses and even a forged document. Workers were excluded from the jury. The case was appealed to the state supreme court by the International Labor Defense; mass pressure for the release of the five men gathered momentum. But the court developed its own tactic: through a barrage of misleading statements it "condemned" petitions to the court. Liberals and some backward workers were intimidated. The court gained its objective—mass pressure stopped. Delay

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HERMAN MICHELSON, LOREN MILLER, BRUCE MINTON,
JOSEPH NORTH, WILLIAM RANDORF.

WILLIAM BROWDER, *Business Manager*

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did the rest. Finally, the court upheld the original sentence. But delay and attempts to smash mass resentment will not dispose of the case. The I. L. D. will carry it to the United States Supreme Court. And the attempt to break up mass protest has led to united action against the railroading of workers.

Post Office G-Men

LAST year when Roosevelt pleaded with industrialists to raise wages, the government simultaneously cut the wages of postoffice employes. Today, the government blesses the Wagner-Lewis Disputes Act and at the same time practices discrimination and an anti-labor policy which the law supposedly condemns. And the government is not above using the same "reasons" for ridding the postal department of militant workers as those utilized by the most reactionary industrial management. Isidore Levine was fired for "delaying the mail and impertinence" after eight years in the department. The charge of "inefficiency" is not the reason of his dismissal; it is necessary to know that Levine belonged to a postal union which was organizing and fighting to improve the conditions of postal employes. The department fears that organization means strong opposition to its "budget-balancing" policy — read, wage cuts. And the reactionary union-heads line up with the government. Union officials applauded the statement of the government heads at the convention of postal organizations: "Postoffice employes must consider themselves G-men." John J. Barrett, president of the United Association of P. O. Clerks, has organized the Crusaders whose purpose it is to ferret out all militants in the union and in the department. Hearst has opened his columns to the good work of baiting Reds.

The Paterson Press

THESE are quickening days for the Fourth Estate. We have already noted the appearance of The People's Press, the national tabloid weekly published in Chicago. Now, out of New Jersey, comes news of The Paterson Press. This new afternoon paper, published by the People's Voice Cooperative Association, will make its debut December 12, and will be a sixteen-page, standard-size daily. The editor, Alexander Crosby, led the Guild strike at The Staten Island Advance. According to its prospectus, The Paterson Press will serve "the interests of the workers and consumers of New Jersey" and its stand on every public issue will be determined by the test: "What will benefit the vast majority of the population?" It will be "the organ of no political party, but will support any individual or party which has a definite program for the elimination of our economic ills. It will oppose others." That it will really do these things, we believe, is indicated by the composition of its ownership. The People's Voice Cooperative Association is an organization of 2,500 people—mostly workers —who have bought shares in the paper at five dollars apiece; in addition, shares are owned by eighty-five working-class organizations with a combined membership of 50,000. The Paterson Press has the support of the Passaic County Central Labor Union, the New Jersey State Federation of Labor, the Socialist Party, the Communist Party and the Paterson Taxpayers' League. THE NEW MASSES greets this expression of a people's movement for unity and progress and it urges its readers to support Paterson's new paper.

Revolt in Brazil

GETULIO VARGAS and his "constitutional" government have of course attempted to minimize the importance of the formidable attack launched against them last week by the National Liberation Alliance, representing a coalition of anti-imperialist forces in Brazil. Yet it is known that the uprising affected not only the agricultural states of Rio Grande do Norte, Parahyba, Alagoas and Pernambuco in the North, but also Paraná in the South, the important central state of Minas Geraes, where a Soviet existed for fifteen days last spring, and the capital city of Rio de Janeiro. Luis Carlos Prestes, at the head of the present movement, led a revolt of lieutenants in 1924 which received so much popular support that it lasted two years. The National Liberation Alliance has far more support today among the masses than Prestes had in 1924. The revolt has apparently not reached serious proportions in a number of centers where the Alliance is known to be strong. It is possible that the movement was a trial of strength, designed to test the popular sentiment but not to exhaust the full revolutionary possibilities of the situation. It is more probable that the revolt is continuing and even gathering momentum behind the screen of censorship

The Vargas government, which assumed power in 1930 with the support of a considerable element of the petty bourgeoisie and even of some workers, has been narrowing its class base ever since. It has failed to keep its demagogic promises, has sold out cynically to British and American imperialists and has imposed a regime of ruthless terror on workers and peasants who have risen in repeated strikes in the last two years. During the first half of the current year alone over a million workers have joined in strike movements; while peasants in the states of Rio de Janeiro and Maranho have also conducted powerful strikes. The petty bourgeoisie, suffering heavily in the crisis, has become increasingly anti-imperialist in sentiment. Workers organized in the Unitary Trade Union Federation of Brazil are said to number over 400,000. From the groups of organized workers, peasants and petty-bourgeois, and from masses of unorganized workers, intellectuals and peasants, has been built the National Liberation Alliance, which has grown rapidly and now assumes the proportions of a broad, popular front. It has for its aim the nationalization of all foreign-owned enterprises, the establishment of real democratic rights (for the first time) and the seizure of power by a government of the broad masses with a real popular foundation, a government which while not Communist nor even avowedly Socialist would include both the Communist and Socialist Parties and would be forced by the logic of events to travel in a leftward direction.

The revolt was skilfully timed. The Alliance established a military base some months ago in the interior of the northern provinces, a region where hatred of the ruling class is widespread and where the authority of the central government is traditionally weak. It foresaw a resort to arms since it had been "dissolved" by official decree. Already in April the federal army was reported disaffected from top to bottom and the government rushed through a law providing for pay increases. When the government was

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unable to find the necessary 300,000 contos and abandoned the increases, the army nearly revolted; two generals and a colonel were relieved of their commands. The government's position was extremely precarious on other counts. The price of coffee had dropped, the value of the milreis on the exchanges had also dropped to a new low and the government was having great difficulty in meeting the payments on its foreign debts. Since then the economic position of the government has gone from bad to worse. It has been negotiating frantically to avoid starting payments to the U. S. under the new thawing agreement. The budget deficit will reach $20,000,000 this year.

Rising internal prices have made the proletariat increasingly restless. The students of the whole country have been conducting a campaign for reduced carfares and cheaper text-books and found themselves opposed by the hated imperialist utility known as the "Light" and by a foreign paper monopoly. The internal politics of several states, especially the important state of Rio de Janeiro, have been thrown into a turmoil by the rival political ambitions of Flores da Cunha of Rio Grande do Sul and Armando Salles Oliveira of San Paulo, both of whom seek to succeed Getulio Vargas as President. Finally, the masses have been driven to new indignation at the alleged growth of the Integralists (Brazilian fascists), who now claim twice the membership they claimed a year ago and whose meetings have been repeatedly attacked and broken up by bands of infuriated workers. When it is recalled that the plantation workers, who make up the bulk of the population in the interior, are in a chronic state of unrest, it is clear why the National Liberation Alliance had real chances of success.

Obviously the prospect of such a movement succeeding would make the American imperialists, with their half-billion-dollar investment in Brazil, stir their coffee with trembling hand. Whatever the outcome of the present movement, it has given a lead to the other South American countries and to the National Liberation Alliances which have been formed there or are in process of formation. Events in Brazil will bear watching. In no country except perhaps China and France are the chances brighter for the early establishment of a united front government of the Left.

The Thomas—Browder Debate

IT WAS not so much the twenty thousand people who jammed Madison Square Garden in New York City, November 27, and who chanted "We Want the United Front" that made the Norman Thomas-Earl Browder debate significant. It was not even the presence of the leader of the "militants" and left-wing groups in the Socialist Party; nor Thomas' willingness after fifteen years to appear with the General Secretary of the Communist Party on the same platform; nor the defiance of the "Old Guard" officialdom implied by Thomas' presence, that gave the evening its historical importance. The big step forward made at the debate was the formulation by Norman Thomas, made clear in the opening sentences of his address, that fascism and reaction are by no means merely theoretical menaces, that these evils along with war must be fought now, without delay, mustering the maximum strength of the working class and its allies. Thomas, indecisive in the past, has finally arrived at the realistic position, that not only does fascism threaten the remnants of American bourgeois democracy but that it can be checked and averted by strong, unrelenting action of all anti-fascists.

The audience at the debate (arranged by The Socialist Call) demonstrated so enthusiastically for the United Front against war and fascism that the "Old Guard" publication, The New Leader, commenting on the debate, showed more verbal restraint than it has in all its years of Red-baiting. Not because the "Old Guard" was converted—any more than similar reaction of other "Old Guard" newspapers gave any sign of willingness to cooperate with the United Front movement—but because the gathering momentum for the United Front is too strong either to scoff at or to brush aside. The Socialist Party understands that it faces either disintegration or a realistic recognition of the wishes of its own rank and file for a United Front broad enough to embrace all anti-fascist elements.

Norman Thomas took his first big step toward a United Front when he accepted the invitation to debate Earl Browder, when he endorsed joint action on specific issues—the struggle to free Angelo Herndon from the Georgia chain gang and the boycott of the Nazi Olympic Games. Thomas indicated his goodwill in stating, "I rejoice that after tonight we will not have to spend so much energy in fighting each other." But he is still hesitant to throw his weight as leader of the progressive elements in the Socialist Party behind a clear-cut endorsement of the United Front between the two parties. He characterizes the Communist position as a "new line," ignoring the repeated Communist proposals to the Socialist Party in the last three years for such action—proposals tabled or rejected.

Browder's speech carried the official endorsement of the Communist Party. "We must not delay any longer. . . . We must act because the enemy is acting. We must join hands to rally the workers and their mass organizations and all other toilers for the Farmer-Labor Party, for the people's front against fascism and war." To this Thomas replied that he agreed in principle. But he spoke as an individual. The weakness of his statements was their personal tone. Thomas reminded the audience that he did not speak for the Socialist Party. And it was obvious that he still hesitated to break definitely once and for all with the "Old Guard."

Thomas questioned Browder. His questions at time became direct attacks on the Soviet Union and showed his unwillingness to accept or his failure to understand the Soviet peace policy. But the central theme of the debate, was the future of the revolutionary movement in this country, not Soviet Russia's peace policy. Browder refused to be led into a discussion of points not dealing directly with the problem of the United Front in America—problems such as the foreign policy of the Soviet Union and the actions of Social Democrats in Germany in the years before Hitler seized power. His plea was for unity and his words showed concretely how such unity could be achieved in the immediate future.

Madison Square Garden was an important keystone in building the foundation of the United Front. Norman Thomas gave ample indication of his approval, despite his hesitancy to commit himself more definitely. He admitted that fascism and war are imminent. He pledged his strength to fight both menaces. This is a promising basis of future action. For, as Browder said, "He who says 'A' must also say 'B'."

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William Gropper

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Italy and Germany

Victor Emmanuel Hopes to Be a King

JOHN STRACHEY

LONDON, Dec. 2.

EVERYBODY here is asking, "How can Mussolini get out?" In governmental circles, the question is asked with ever-growing anxiety. It is true that the British government is itself putting quite considerable pressure upon him, that it is determined not to let him get away with his Ethiopian adventure in the sense of establishing a dominant position in the Mediterranean and the Red Sea. But British ministers are quite as much appalled by the prospect of Mussolini's failure and collapse as by the prospect of his success. And the prospect of his collapse is today the immediate one. Hence the extraordinary twisting and shifting of the British government's line over the oil sanctions—a twisting and shifting which I understand has done great harm in the United States.

Cutting off Italian oil supplies is the one really effective sanction so far proposed. The trouble for the British government is precisely that it is much too effective, since once it is applied, Mussolini's collapse seems certain. Thus the British government, to say nothing of the French government, are doing everything in their power to postpone its application. The date of the meeting of the League Committee which is to decide upon it has now twice been postponed. On the other hand, the British government cannot postpone this date indefinitely for if it does so, Mussolini would be too much encouraged. It is only by keeping the threat of the oil embargo hanging over his head that there is any hope of bringing him to terms, for the reason, I think, that if he does not come to terms—and I do not quite see how he can—the oil embargo will be in the end applied.

Moreover, it is clear that the Italian campaign in Ethiopia is going badly—just how badly nobody knows. But one can imagine what would happen if by any chance the Italians suffered a real defeat. It is not, I think, true to say that Italian troops are always bad fighters. They can, on occasions, attack fiercely and courageously, but they are undoubtedly—shall we say—temperamental. If once they get on the run they do not stop for a long time. This was the experience of all the soldiers who served with them in the last war.

One can imagine what would happen if once the Ethiopians scored a considerable success. There might be an African Caporetto. Such an event would have worldwide repercussions. Its first effect, I think, would be to swing round the attitude of the British government. All pressure on Mussolini would be relaxed. Desperate efforts would be made actually to prop him up. But if there is a real disaster in Africa, it is more than doubtful if such attempts could succeed. In this connection everybody here is repeating a reported wisecrack of the King of Italy which may or may not be current in America. The King was asked what he thought of the Ethiopian war. He replied that it was all right by him. "If the Italians win," he said, "I shall be King of Ethiopia. If on the other hand the Ethiopians win, why then I shall be King of Italy again."

He meant, of course, that an Italian defeat would mean Mussolini's fall. But whether it would mean the restoration of a nice, comfortable, constitutional monarchy as Victor Emmanuel supposes, is quite another matter. In any case, the result of the Italian adventure will have profound reactions upon the next phase of the main European drama.

For the main drama turns remorselessly on the question of Germany, on the question of the ever-rising power of German fascist aggression. The question is what will be the reaction of the British government to this menace? People sometimes suppose that the question is one of whether or not the British government is more frightened of — and therefore hostile to — Germany or the Soviet Union. This is not so. The British government is incomparably more frightened of Germany than it is of the Soviet Union. The question is what will be the British ministers' reaction to their fear of Germany? Will it be to seek allies in France, Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union and the other League powers against Germany or will it be an attempt to placate Germany in one way or another in order to shunt her aggression off east, on to the Soviet Union?

The preliminary moves toward the latter line of policy may be looked for in what is called "The reform of the League of Nations." Reform is to consist of scrapping article sixteen and the other relevant articles which on paper at any rate make the League into a tight defensive alliance of its members. Thus all reality is to be taken out of the League structure. Then Germany is to be readmitted as a gesture of friendship to her on the part of Britain and France. Then the Franco-Soviet pact under British pressure is to be scrapped or shelved. The road east would then have been opened as wide as British diplomacy can open it. Already there are voices in the British press demanding precisely this policy. A serious sign of inclination in this direction is also offered by the exclusion of Winston Churchill from the Cabinet by a characteristic piece of bilking. Mr. Baldwin after, it is stated, more or less promising the Admiralty to Churchill, has quietly shelved him. He has done so, it is said, because of Churchill's uncompromising anti-German attitude. Indeed, the whole set of Mr. Baldwin's mind inclines him, I am afraid, toward an attempted conciliation and placation of the Nazis. Baldwin will not, I expect, carry through the pro-German line unequivocally or wholeheartedly, for he never does anything unequivocally or wholeheartedly. But he will, unless other forces can be brought into play, move in that general direction.

The question is largely one of time. If we can delay the development of the pro-German line of the British governing class, if we can prevent the opening of the road east to Hitler for, say, another two years, an immense gain will have been made. For I simply do not see the practicability of a German attack on the Soviet Union after the completion of the Second Five Year Plan at the end of 1937.

(These cable dispatches by John Strachey appear weekly in THE NEW MASSES.)

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The Nazis' Olympic Chief Talks

"It Would Be a Great Blow if America Stayed Out"

JOHN L. SPIVAK

WARSAW, POLAND, Nov. 30.

IT SEEMS that there is no reason for any agitation in favor of a boycott of the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin, because I have been given official assurance by Dr. Theodore Lewald, president of the German Olympic Committee, that there is no foundation for the stories spread by "lying Jews and Catholics."

If Jews come to Germany for the Games they will be protected, even if that means calling out the police to break up possible riots and insults.

Jews have no need to worry, for they will be housed, if there is no room in hotels, in Jewish homes so that they will cause no annoyance to the Aryans.

Catholics, Dr. Lewald remarked, "cannot be recognized by the shapes of their noses in the same way that Jews can be recognized, so that if they keep their mouths shut they can even be housed with the Aryans."

The Nazis are frankly dismayed at the possibility of America not participating in the coming Olympics. They have spent over $10,000,000 building the Olympic village to house the contestants, constructing bridges and streets, and in other preparations. They expect visitors to pay well and thus bring in the much-needed profit, as well as producing the impression on visitors and on the restless German masses that the outside world approves the Nazi regime.

Boycott talk has become so serious that Count Baillet-Latour, president of the International Olympic Committee, was summoned to a talk with Der Fuehrer and issued the following statement:

> There is no ground for opposition. Visitors will be welcomed and there is no risk that visitors will be offended. The present move to boycott the Olympics has its origin in political foes and is based on false assertions.

I was so impressed by this statement that I wondered whether the faith of the German people had been abused. So I went to talk to Staats-Sekretar Lewald, who has held important positions in the German government for years. The headquarters of the Eleventh Olympiad at 43 Hardenbergstrasse are filled with pictures of Hitler. Heavy, athletic, middle-aged Germans sat and stood in the reception room. Their conversation was devoted entirely to the necessity of contacting American friends who oppose the "Jewish boycott." Their voices were filled with undisguised hate.

When Lewald's secretary heard that an American journalist wanted an interview, he made an immediate appointment for me. Apparently American journalists are not coming in droves to the headquarters of the Eleventh Olympiad.

Lewald, an elderly man with thin grey hair, greeted me cordially and started a rapid stream of talk even before I had an opportunity to ask questions on the glories of the Olympic Games. In 1932, only 1,500 contestants took part in the Games held in Los Angeles. Berlin expects over 4,000, with forty-nine nations taking part, and 100,000 to 150,000 visitors daily, totalling over 1,000,000 for the entire period of the Games. Every time I tried to interrupt his steady stream of talk, he took a deep breath and started again.

"Tell me," I finally managed to say while he was taking another deep breath, "have any countries refused to send athletes?"

"Only Palestine," he told me. "But even in this case we received a very nice letter of regret which said that since they had only recently started to develop athletics, they didn't think they would be able to compete. A very nice letter. Now the Soviet Union," he added anxiously, "has no Olympic Committee, so they cannot send competitors. We've no objection to the Soviet Union's participation if they had an Olympic Committee—"

"You see," I remarked, "America is particularly interested not so much in what happens to Jewish and Catholic competitors as in the treatment of Jewish and Catholic visitors."

Lewald fidgeted in the chair, leaning forward a little pugnaciously.

"I'm particularly interested," I continued, "that no information is carried in your press releases. For instance, I'd like to know if German Jews and Catholics will be allowed to compete in the Games?"

"Why not?" he asked, his eyes flashing. "If they have the proper qualifications for the Olympics. We admit everyone that comes up to the Olympic standard. But—" he leaned forward and smiled, tapping my knee with a fatherly hand, "it is a curious thing that out of five hundred American athletes of first rank, only five Jews are included. That makes one out of every hundred. No?" He laughed gaily. "The same situation exists here. Jews and Aryans have the same opportunities, but somehow—" he looked at me with a winning smile, "somehow, they don't meet the standard."

"Well, do *any* German Jews come up to standard?"

"We can't tell yet," he said hastily. "The elimination contests are not over." He made an expansive gesture. "But there has certainly been no discrimination against Catholics here. The Catholic youth organizations are privileged to enter the Hitler youth movement—that shows that there is no discrimination, doesn't it?"

"Sounds like a strong argument," I agreed cautiously. "But viewing the well-known Nazi activities, do you really expect Jewish and Catholic athletes to come to Berlin?"

"Of course, we invited them—" he grew increasingly excited. "Why does America talk so much of Nazi discrimination? Why doesn't America look to —look to the wood in your eye—you know the Biblical quotation."

"Beam in your eye?" I said helpfully.

"Ja!" he exclaimed with enthusiasm. "Why doesn't America look to the beam in her own eyes? What about discrimination against Negroes in the South. No? You don't let Negroes mingle with white people—even Jews. Why look at the beam in our eyes?" he demanded. "The Olympic Committee doesn't ask whether a competitor is a Jew or an Aryan."

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"What we want to know is what sort of treatment Jews and Catholics will get if they come to Berlin?" I repeated.

"They will be received with open arms. We hope many Jews will come and spend lots of money. They have money, you know," he added slyly and laughed. "It's really an absurd question. You never heard of Americans being molested in Germany."

"Yes," I said sadly. "Many have been molested. In fact, it became so bad that the American ambassador protested to Hitler."

"I doubt it," Lewald cried excitedly. "I never heard of it. All right, maybe one, maybe two cases, but all that is past and anyone who comes to the Games will have a pleasant time. Why Baillet-Latour saw the Chancellor and issued a statement guaranteeing there would be no trouble for the Jews."

"How can you guarantee no trouble from insults?"

He waved his hands excitedly. "This summer thousands of Americans, and there were many Jews among them, thousands came to Germany and not one was bothered. Germany is a peaceful nation. Peace will prevail. If it is necessary to call the police to protect the contestants and visitors—" he stopped, adding hastily, "But that won't be necessary."

"I understand hotels in Berlin can accommodate 30,000. But you expect four or five times as many people, to be placed in private homes. Where do you intend to place the Jews—with the Aryans?"

Lewald's face reddened. He stood up, making a nervous gesture.

Excitedly—"They can go to the Adlon, the Bristol, the Kaiserhof. They don't ask a man if he's a Jew or a Catholic. We'll place Jews and Catholics where we have room for them."

"What happens when a Jew has semitic features and when he's placed in an Aryan home and waited on by an Aryan frau?"

"We won't—" he began, then stopped suddenly. "Of course, Jews will have to look for rooms themselves and make arrangements for meals and residence. If they don't like what they get, they don't have to stay."

"You mean if Aryans don't like their semitic features they don't have to rent rooms?" I wanted to know.

"There won't be any difficulty," he broke in. "You see, we hope many Jews will come and spend lots of money. Germany needs Jewish money."

"Suppose America doesn't send teams? What will Germany's attitude to Jews and Catholics be then?"

"We would regret such a move exceedingly. It would be a great blow to the Games and to Germany, because America is the greatest country for sports. The trouble comes," he continued excitedly, "the trouble comes from speeches by rabbis and priests. They're always talking against the Olympics held in Germany. This is not a religious question but a question of sports. Nothing to do with religion. The whole Olympic organization never thinks if a man is a Jew or a Catholic."

"That's very interesting," I remarked. "Tell me, are there Jews and Catholics working in this Olympic organization?"

His face grew apoplectic. He jumped up from the chair and banged his fist on the table.

"I—I—I refuse to answer such a question. Why do you come here and ask that? I say there is no discrimination!"

"I know, but you said that the question doesn't arise so I merely asked whether Jews and Catholics are employed here?"

"That's nobody's business but ours," he shouted, losing his temper completely. "Why do you come here and ask such questions? Look at your own athletic clubs. I've been there. You don't find Jews in them—"

"I merely asked because you are so emphatic that the Olympic Committee does not consider religion and does not think of discrimination."

"We chose our help to suit ourselves," he shouted. "That's our business and not America's or anyone else's."

"That's okay with me," I said. "Now—"

"That's all the questions I'll answer."

"One more," I insisted gently. "Aren't you part Jewish yourself?"

His face became purple with fury. "I refuse to answer," he shouted at the top of his voice, so loud that the secretary and reception clerk rushed in. "You go—you must go—" Lewald's voice had risen so that it was almost a shriek. The secretary's and clerk's faces were white. "Please," they urged, "You had better go."

"I only wanted to tell America," I said cheerfully.

"We have a press department and friends in America. We'll tell them," Lewald shouted. "Go!"

JOHN L. SPIVAK

has been in Europe for several months as the roving correspondent of THE NEW MASSES. He has been traveling up and down Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, observing, inquiring and finding out. He will cover most of the other major countries within the next few months, and his dispatches will appear in THE NEW MASSES each week. In his second article, in next week's issue, Spivak relates his experiences with the Special Tribunal of Fascist Italy. It is called

"LA MADAMA SMILES"

by JOHN L. SPIVAK

In The New Masses Next Week

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Why Lewis Resigned

WILLIAM F. DUNNE

THE resignation of John L. Lewis from the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor in order to dramatize the industrial unionism issue and the organization of the Committee for Promoting Industrial Organization, shows the speed with which struggle between forces of reaction and progress within the A.F. of L. is proceeding. It is only six weeks since the Atlantic City convention adjourned.

The battle line between craft unionism and industrial unionism within the American Federation of Labor is now clearly defined by decisive developments which have crowded upon each other since the Atlantic City convention where the opposing alignments were indicated in the resolutions and debates, following the San Francisco convention, where issues and forces appeared in outlines only.

The organized workers in the basic industries are now, through their union machinery, taking determined steps to reconstruct the A.F. of L. on an industrial basis.

As THE NEW MASSES stated in estimating the results of the Atlantic City convention, the central question was the organization of the unorganized in the basic industries as the most necessary step for effective resistance to the open-shop drive, company unionism, wage cuts, speedup, fascist reaction and war.

The Committee for Industrial Organization recently established by eight unions, headed by John L. Lewis of the United Mine Workers, with headquarters in Washington, D. C., is not only the organizational expression of the determination to organize the unorganized on an industrial basis but is an open challenge to the throttling authority of the tory wing of the A.F. of L. executive council. In actuality it is another labor-union c nter to which the organized workers in basic industries already have given their allegiance.

But the question raised by President Green and others of the likelihood of a split in the A.F. of L. as a result of the activities of the Committee for Industrial Organization and its adherents serves only to befog the real issue. The craft-union wing of the Executive Council—now the majority of that body—bases its opposition to industrial unionism and its support of the right of craft unions to "raid" the industrial unions, on purely formal constitutional provisions and precedents that have no real connection with the present needs of workers confronted by the gigantic power of monopoly capital—increasingly concentrated during six years of crisis.

Permanent mass unemployment with a rising index of industrial production, the continued existence of an army of ten to twelve million unemployed while production figures are within ten points of 1929, the continued lowering of the total income of the working class and its living and social standards, have brought millions of workers to the realization that their right to work and live depends upon the building of a powerful industrial-union movement in the United States—that all barriers to this in the form of persons and policies, union officials and outworn programs, must be swept aside.

In only one decisive basic industry has wide mass organization been secured during the crisis and the period of N.R.A.—in coal mining. (In the clothing industry there has been sweeping organization but it cannot be compared to coal mining in importance for the labor movement as a whole.) The great majority of workers in steel, metal mining and smelting, oil wells and refineries, heavy machinery and electrical apparatus manufacturing, auto, rubber, textile, chemical manufacture, light and power production, telephone and telegraph, are still unorganized. Marine transport is well organized but the unions of seamen and longshoremen are dominated by thoroughly reactionary officials who, however, face a powerful rank-and-file movement for industrial organization.

The picture of the forces of the American Federation of Labor compared to those of the organized employers is not a pleasing sight to anyone conscious of the fact that labor throughout the capitalist world today has to fight for such elementary things as the right to organize and to strike—the mere right to a minimum level of human decency.

At the Atlantic City convention Secretary Morrison was able to show by per capita tax figures a gain of only some 450,000 members over 1934. The figures show a gain of some 900,000 over 1933, but if we deduct 100,000 newly-organized coal miners and some 100,000 clothing and textile workers from this estimate, we see that the gains in other industries by the A.F. of L., under the leadership of the Green-Woll tory wing, amount actually to very little in spite of all their orotund pronouncements about the benefits handed to labor by the New Deal. The membership figures are 3,050,000 for 1935 and 2,600,000 for 1934.

The Committee for Industrial Organization has a perfect case. The shameless neglect and sabotage of the organization of the unorganized by the executive council during the whole crisis, its paralyzing policy of sifting out the mechanics from industrial unions, distributing them as gifts to the moribund craft unions, thereby splitting the unions and discouraging the struggles of workers facing the might of the most powerful corporations and their agencies, cannot be explained away. But the tory wing of the council has no intention of stopping these treacherous practices, no intention of relinquishing the right of the craft unions to raid not only the new but the older unions with industrial charters.

The forces for industrial unionism have now taken the offensive by the organization of a center, by launching a propaganda campaign for industrial unionism, by practical aid to the independent union of shipyard workers in Camden, by appeals to central labor bodies and state federations—by the resignation of Lewis and an open challenge to the authority of the executive council on the central question of organization in basic industry.

These are historic acts. They are of revolutionary significance when seen in connection with the background and development of the American labor movement. Writing in The Daily Worker for Nov. 28, William Z. Foster, chairman of the Communist Party and a trade-union organizer whose remarkable ability even his enemies acknowledge, said:

> The millions of unorganized workers are now looking with hope towards the A.F. of L., feeling that at long last a real organization campaign will be carried on. . . . The Committee on Industrial Organization, headed by Lewis, composed of eight presidents of industrial unions, has declared that its purpose is to unify and strengthen the AF. of L., to organize the workers in the basic industries into the A.F. of L. . . . The Communists have always fought for such an organizing campaign. . . . The Communists support the struggle. Of course Communists have many important differences with many of the major principles of John L. Lewis. Lewis is now opposed to the Farmer-Labor Party which would further unite the workers. . . . Lewis still supports President Roosevelt whose party has launched a murderous strikebreaking campaign. . . . Lewis speaks of fascism and Communism in the same breath. He lumps together fascism and Communism, which means democracy for all who toil. . . . But the Communist Party supports the struggle of Lewis and all others in their fight to achieve unity . . . through the elimination of craft barriers. The Communists will, as they always have, support with all their energies the movement for organizing the unorganized workers in A.F. of L. industrial unions.

The industrial unions grouped around the Committee for Promotion of Industrial Organization are the backbone of the A.F. of L. There is no doubt that in the near future the committee will include representatives of the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers (whose members are in favor of the industrial union program) and of the new unions in rubber and auto.

The powerful movement for industrial unionism cannot and will not remain purely an economic one. It must and will and rapidly take on a definite working-class political character. Something of this is to be sensed in Lewis' statement quoted in The Herald Tribune, Nov. 29, in an interview giving the reasons for an industrial union center:

> There are forces at work which would wipe out, if they could, the labor movement of America just as the labor movements of Germany and Italy were wiped out.

The progressive forces of American labor are now preparing for decisive struggles and spurred on by the most pressing necessity a new labor movement is being built. In the course of this struggle the "non-partisan political policy" will have to make way for an independent Labor Party based on unions.

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The Klan Turns to Murder

BRUCE MINTON

LAKELAND, FLA.

WHEN several men stepped on the porch of their house and knocked at the door, Frank and Ethel Norman were mildly surprised. But now that the citrus union was functioning, it wasn't unusual to have visitors even so late as nine o'clock in the evening. Workers often came to Frank Norman for advice; in the dark, they could visit without being spotted by the deputies.

It was mild outdoors, a typical Florida spring night, the kind that makes Lakeland a splendid resort, and more important, the center of the citrus industry. The Normans had almost finished their letter writing. In the front room, Mr. and Mrs. Surrency, boarders and friends, had already turned out the light. Four-year-old Frankie was long ago in bed.

Frank Norman rose and went to the door. Mrs. Norman could hear the low voices of men intent on what they were saying. She looked at the paper in front of her, not writing, not listening to the murmuring drone from the porch, thinking of how much it meant to have Frank back after three months at the training school for workers. He had returned with such energy, talking with a new fluency about things he had always felt. Life wasn't any bed of roses in Lakeland despite the circulars put out by the Chamber of Commerce. Work remained difficult to find; Mrs. Norman sighed—at least, she had her cannery job. Frank couldn't land anything that would allow him to practice his trade as electrician. Formerly, he had belonged to the Citrus Workers' Union, the same as she, and for a short time had held the position to which she had also been elected, secretary and treasurer of the Lakeland local. Now, Frank must accept work relief—at six dollars a week. The owners refused to hire him—called him an "agitator," a "Red." He talked about organizing the grove workers and packing-plant men; he favored treating Negroes like human beings. Imagine, the moneyed men were saying, treating a "nigger" like you would anyone else, when everyone knows a "nigger" has no soul! Frank Norman, "furrener" from the North (eight years in Florida and married to a Georgia girl made no difference), Frank Norman refused to accept such distinctions between white and black. He continued to talk about Negro rights, even met with Negroes just as if they were equals—and that sort of action, said the big growers and business men, was calculated to stir up the Negroes and put ideas into their heads.

When the United Citrus Workers' Union came to Lakeland from Haines City, forty miles down the road, Frank Norman took the lead in organizing the local. The workers trusted him. They began to grasp what he was driving at when he advocated Negroes joining too, white and black sticking together, each refusing to scab on the other. Things aren't done that way in the South. It's all very well, the white officials agreed, to have a Negro local—under the strict jurisdiction of the nearby white local. The Negroes would be told what to do, when to strike, what to ask for, how to cooperate with their white superiors. They would get their orders. Frank Norman objected to that arrangement. Well, it was generally conceded in high circles that Frank Norman was a bad influence.

Rumors circulated, rumors that worried Mrs. Norman. She wouldn't interfere with Frank: he knew best and when he explained to her, she saw his idea as clear as day. But the bankers and growers objected to Frank's organization, the International Labor Defense. At the meetings, whites and blacks gathered together, and the blacks didn't stand while the whites sat down, but all sat down together. The owners told each other that the International what-do-you-call-it was "Comoonistic" and wished nothing more than to destroy society by demanding high wages, by having Negroes rape white women and by putting Negroes at the head of the state. As bad, worse, than the Catholics, for the Catholics had a Pope that was white and now the Comoonists came along and no one knew where they'd stop.

Lakeland's "better class" drew a sigh of relief when Frank Norman went away to school. Then, just as things were looking up, the citrus workers struck in the packing plants and forced concessions. In the wake of this victory, Frank Norman returned. He talked just as much about militant organization and Negro rights as he did before he went away.

Mrs. Norman knew the Southern owners. They prided themselves on patriotism, thought of themselves as happy, carefree altruists who only wanted to make a living. It wasn't their concern that the search for profit meant starvation for workers. The owners didn't make the depression, not a bit of it. All they desired was their profit—"building the South" is the way they put it—and to live decently. If workers can't live decently too—well, suh, no one gave the bosses nothin', they jest got it by sweatin' work and now they sho' had a right to what brains done bring 'em. The niggers—Frank Norman had no business fixin' to stir 'em up. They'd gotten 'long up to now and no damned Comoonistic furrener's goin' to up and tell a self-respectin' suthe'n gen'leman how to care fo' his niggers.

The door slammed. Frank came toward her, thin and tall, his deep-set eyes worried, biting his lip, running his fingers through the mass of brown hair. He stood over her. "Sheriff Chase 'n two deputies are outside," he said in a low voice. "They want me t'go down the road toward Haines City to 'dentify a Negro who's been lynched." He stopped, clearing his throat. "I'll bet it's one of my I.L.D. members."

Mrs. Norman stood up. "Well, then, I'm a-goin' with you."

"D'you really want t'go?"

"Yes."

She followed him out on the porch, feeling sick, seeing the brown body swaying slowly back and forth at the end of a rope. They'd do anything, the Klan, anything. She glanced at the strangers, one leaning against a post a little way down the porch, the second playing with Frankie's puppy and the third, evidently the one who called himself Sheriff Chase, smiling, conciliatory, huge in the dim moonlight. Well over six feet and a two hundred pounder.

"Mrs. Norman here's goin' with us."

The big man smiled and bowed. "That's sho' all right if you want t'go, Mrs. No'man, but it's no place fo' any lady."

Frank shrugged. "Why, she's seen one Negro lynched an' I guess she can see another one."

"Well, come on then."

Mrs. Norman told Frank to let the Surrencys know where they were going. Perhaps they would look after Frankie. She went into the house. When she returned, Ben Surrency was out by the car, hurriedly dressing, eager to accompany Frank. She decided to stay behind with Mrs. Surrency. "But you can take our car," she said.

"There's no need fo' that," said the big sheriff, kindly, immense against the dark sky. "It won't take more'n a couple minutes to go down there and have a look at that body. We done found Mr. No'man's name and address on a slip o' paper in the nigger's pocket. Why take yo' car when we've got a nice car just down here?"

They left the porch. Mrs. Norman looked after them, the huge sheriff lumbering before, followed by the two smaller deputies and then Frank and Mr. Surrency. They stepped into the car—Frank and Ben Surrency in the back seat with the immense man called Sheriff Chase. The car drove off, down the dirt road, round the bend across the railroad track.

He was never to come back, Frank Nor-

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man. She would never see him again. He rode away in the car and out of life.

THAT was a year and a half ago, April 11, 1934. When I came to Florida to investigate the Norman case, it was already too late to do more than talk to people, attempt to ascertain what had happened. The body of Frank Norman has never been found. It is impossible to *prove* who committed the murder, though it is generally conceded that the method was that of the Ku Klux Klan—whether acting officially or unofficially cannot be determined. The man who posed as Sheriff Chase is known—but as yet he cannot be prosecuted. He is not a resident of Lakeland, that much can be said, but an official of the Klan living in a nearby city and noted for his brutality, his terroristic and anti-labor activity. He is a big man, six foot four in height, weighing 190 pounds. He mentions the Norman case whenever an opportunity presents itself—fondly, a cherished memory.

The case of Frank Norman leads far afield: into Klan activities, into the terror which is so intense in Florida, into the labor movement and the fight of the unemployed for even a subsistence level of direct and work relief, into the treatment and position of the Negro. Florida is one southern state where cotton is not king; here, the orange and grapefruit rule. Sharecropping is rare; the Negro for the most part does not live on ranches and estates of the owners as a chattel slave. In Florida, he is free—free for the most drastic and vicious exploitation that workers can possibly endure.

Mr. Surrency was the last man to see Norman alive—except for the murderers. After the shooting, Mr. Surrency remained in Lakeland. He is a slow, honest, kindly "cracker" and his contact with violence frightened him. The terror and intimidation exercised by the newspapers and the sheriff's office created in Mr. Surrency a state of extreme panic. Finally, several months ago, he could stand it no longer. He left Lakeland, journeying far to the south, to the wild Everglades, where in the plains a great distance from the main road he and his wife live in a primitive shack, farming, picking up odd jobs here and there. He is almost inaccessible—one must travel along a sandy wagon trail, across swamp and plain, to reach his house that stands on stilts in the middle of nowhere. He was surprised, taken aback to have visitors. He opened up the shack—a square room of ill-fitting boards with daylight showing through and a dilapidated shingle roof. And he repeated what he had already stated in an affidavit signed by him:

> Mr. Norman stepped in the car in the rear seat, I followed in the middle. The supposed Mr. Chase got in with us in the back seat. As we drove off at possible 100 yards from the house, Mr. Norman ask Mr. Chase to show his authority as he did not know whether he was the high sheriff or not. The man answered, "I am not Sheriff Chase but a deputive from Highland City. It doesn't matter, the Negro has a card with your name and home address on it, and we want you to identify him so we can take him down for an inquest." Mr. Norman says, "Will you please stop about 100 yards farther down the road so I can pick up another man, as he might be a help to identify the Negro?" The man says "Sure," and turned on Ingram Avenue instead of following the Bartow Road according to Mr. Norman's instructions. I judge we drove forty yards when the car came to a sudden stop. The man sitting beside the driver covered Mr. Norman with a gun. Then he asked me my name. As I told him my name was Ben Surrency, he said, "Get out. I don't want you." I got out as I was told. As Mr. Norman put up both his hands, asking the man what in the world does this mean. Mr. Norman was saying other words as I was rushed out of the car and I could not understand what he was saying. As I got on the street a gun fired. And an awful thumping noise was heard in the car. The supposed-to-be Sheriff Chase took me by the shoulder and faced me back home and told me not to look back. Another car 40 or 50 feet back of the car I just got out of and facing me stopped with their bright lights on. Both cars remained still until I had passed the second car some distance. Then they both sped on.

He sat leaning against a post, the gaunt Mr. Surrency, trying to recall more. "Are you able to give any sort of description of the big man?" I asked. "Anything that would identify him?"

"Now, that's sho' hard to say," he answered, poking with his pocket knife at the rotting wood. "I had no cause to look closely at the supposed-to-be Sheriff Chase. So I cannot say who the man was. He was very big—but it was dark. . . ."

Surrency has been under pressure from the authorities; but it is fairly probable that he really does not know the murderer and could not recognize him. "Pretty hard to remember all that way back," he kept repeating. "Dark 'n I didn't know what was a-goin' to happen so I just didn't look and when they put me outta the car, they told me not to look back—"

These are the only facts that can be ascertained concerning the murder. Frank Norman has not been seen or heard of since. There are many theories as to what happened to the body. Perhaps, as one man said, it was buried on the property of one of the kidnapers. Or perhaps, some insist, it burned in the mysterious fire that occured a few days later in the vicinity. Or it was dumped into one of the many lakes that surround Lakeland and Orlando. The head of an unidentified man was found in Maitland by workers cleaning out brush—it might be Frank Norman's; the sheriff took good care not to ask Mrs. Norman to attempt to identify it. More likely, the body of Frank Norman was thrown into one of the flooded phosphate pits close by. Some day, when the pits are drained, the remains of a skeleton may be found which can no longer be identified. The murderers did a good job.

EVEN the Klan and the grove owners couldn't prevent at least the gestures of an investigation. When Surrency dashed back to the house, breathless, sick with fright and blurted out what had happened, Mrs. Norman picked up Frankie and with the Surrencys rushed to the nearest telephone at a drugstore down the road. Sheriff Chase could not be reached. Peculiarly enough, his deputies were sitting in a car in front of the drugstore. Mr. Surrency climbed into the car which went off in what proved a fruitless effort to find the abductors. A block away loitered a second police car—so the garage man remarked a few days later, surprised at the turnout of the law in quiet Lakeland. But Sheriff Chase was away and had left no forwarding address: though that same night he stopped for gas about eight o'clock some forty miles outside of Lakeland. He told the attendant to fill up the car and be snappy about it because he had to be in Lakeland within the hour. Yet when Mrs. Norman tried to reach him that night, he couldn't be located—or at least he wasn't answering calls that might come from frantic Mrs. Norman.

The "investigation" dragged on a few days. Nothing happened—not surprising to most people. The newspapers were apathetic so far as finding Norman was concerned; they were not apathetic when it came to denouncing him. The Red scare arrived in Lakeland. The Lakeland News announced:

> A pamphlet was given The News yesterday by a citizen of Lakeland who stated that Norman was representative of what was known as promoting Communistic doctrines in Lakeland and had suggested to some the forming of a nudist colony.

The Lakeland Evening Ledger "scooped" the world with the following:

> In grapevine circles, it is said that he is in New York City. There is little credence here in the theory that he was slain by the small group posing as officers that kidnaped him on the night of April 11. Another story is to the effect that he spent unwisely funds entrusted to him by the communist organization, and paid the penalty, whatever that was.

A man bribed little Frankie with gum to say that his father was in Chicago. But despite these rumors, no doubt existed in anyone's mind that Frank Norman had been killed by Klansmen backed by the big owners. Norman was a militant unionist and one of the driving forces in the organization of citrus workers. He advocated the right of Negroes to organize. The growers and bankers feared him, wanted him out of the way. Just before the murder, Sheriff Chase had asked questions of the other workers concerning Norman. The manager of the J. O. Barnes Packing House in Highland City, the head of the biggest concern in the vicinity, Chandler and Davis Packing House, the manager of the Exchange Packing House fulminated against Norman and his activities. The heads of the union resented him, because he was continually exposing their weak-kneed policies, their willingness to knuckle

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under when ordered to by the packers. When Norman was killed, the workers knew very well who was behind it. Nor were they too astonished that Sheriff Chase did nothing despite a great deal of noisy "investigating," and that the newspapers covered up the facts with a barrage of innuendoes and Red baiting.

Mrs. Norman appealed to the federal government, to President and Mrs. Roosevelt, to Governor Scholtz of Florida, to Mrs. Lindbergh whose child had been kidnaped and killed. Stony silence, except for two curt notes from the Department of Justice stating that the federal government lacked any jurisdiction. The case finally dragged to an end when Sheriff Chase reported to Governor Scholtz that because of Mrs. Norman's unwillingness to help the investigation, because she refused to talk, he could do no more than he had already done. Which was exactly nothing.

Sheriff Chase sat in his Bartow office—nothing of the small country policeman about him. He took a quick look at me, holding my hand a little too long. "How about a Coca Cola?" he asked. "I'll send out for some."

"That's nice of you, Sheriff. You see, I'm from the North and I've run across a case which I'd like to ask you about—"

He picked up the receiver, ordered drinks and cigarettes. "Now, we'll get this straight," he said. "Your name?"

He wrote down everything I said. He interrupted every few seconds to make a phone call, official, good-natured, a rotund, jovial man behind the desk, with his wide-brimmed hat tilted back and his leather jacket open. About five feet nine—"Where d'you hear of this story?"

"Oh, just here and there. They told me no proper investigation had ever been made."

"I wouldn't say that. Not by a long shot. Here, take a package of cigarettes. This the kind you use?"

"Thanks. But this case. I'd like to know more details—"

He leaned close to me, squeezing my arm, smiling. "Oh, you know all about it. You are not so innocent as you look. You know a helluva lot more than you're telling me. Come on, tell me what you know. I'll spill my story *after* you've given me yours. There's nothing in this case. One of my deputies saw this fellow—what's his name—riding in a car the next day heading north, big as life. I want to get at the bottom of this case just as much as—but no one's telling me anything. I've done everything I could. This fellow's not dead—you can be sure of that. But who do you represent? What d'you really want? And you might give me your address and where you're goin' to be. If you want to make any statement—" pencil poised over the scratch pad, watching me out of the corner of his eye, smiling—.

Yes, Sheriff Chase is interested in the Norman case. He has done a good job. He has investigated plenty—always in the direction where he could be absolutely certain he'd run across nothing that might embarrass him, the sheriff of Polk County. It would be unwise to antagonize friends in the Klan and the American Legion. And who cares about a Red anyway?

There the case rests—and has rested for over a year. Frank Norman, electrician, veteran who served two years overseas, militant worker whose father was a militant worker before him, American who believed in the Fourteenth Amendment, Communist—Frank Norman is dead. The murderers go free—to terrorize, to beat and maim whenever they decide it is time for an evening's outing. One of them can be pointed out any time you get to a little city near Lakeland. He's a big fellow, six feet four, weighing 190 pounds.

WHEN the Klan came for Norman, it is logical to believe that the intention was to take him out, scare him, beat him thoroughly, see to it that he got out of the citrus belt. But Norman resisted. The gun went off. The bullet killed Norman. The kidnapers had gone further than they had originally planned.

The murder unleashed terror—against the I.L.D. and against the citrus union. Fear and intimidation and the lack of a firm leader temporarily broke up the I.L.D. The Klan's fiery cross burned before this house and that: workers were beaten.

Norman's associates bore the brunt of intimidation. Guy Stotts, sign painter, Norman's intimate friend, was warned not to talk if he valued his life. He wrote a "retraction," the irony of which evidently escaped the editor of the local paper, for he printed it in full:

> After receiving the second threat on my life for my socialistic propensities, I hereby waive my constitutional right to freedom of speech and beliefs and all socialistic or Communistic proclivities I might have had, and cease to contribute my efforts to bring a universal brotherhood of man and do hereby publicly announce my reversion to the prevalent Democratic principle of "dog eat dog."

Naturally, the owners did not overlook the citrus union. Picketing is illegal in Lakeland. Workers on strike are considered fair targets for snipers. The owners were aided by the willingness of union officials to break up the organization. A former union president, Mr. Chapman, accepted a job from a big packing company at Haines City to manage the "hotel"—a skyscraper structure in the middle of the plain, erected in boom days and now used to house girls who have been herded into the company union. Two other union officials made a deal with the packers to call a strike toward the end of the season, then call it off immediately before it could get under way, the strategy being to discourage and disillusion the workers in union activity. They were rewarded for this stalwart service with substantial benefits. The rank and file? The officials were not particularly concerned.

The union was busted. Workers—militant and backward, inexperienced in union organization—threw up their hands and once taken in, swore never to be fooled again. They continued to work for 17½ cents an hour, ten hours a day in the scorching fields, earning less than two dollars a day, or twelve dollars a week. They could live by it—just about. Some worked all year round; over half worked less than six months. How did they exist in the meantime? It's hard to say. That is the answer one hears to this question all over Florida—"It's hard to say. I don't know." Sometimes they got relief; sometimes they picked things out of garbage cans; sometimes they died of starvation. The Negro—his lot is, of course, a great deal worse.

Or if you landed a job hoeing trees, you received 2½ cents a tree and a good man, better than average, can hoe fifty trees a day. That nets him $1.25—so long as work lasts. The owners, the big growers, the newspapers, say that a man can take care of a family, feed and clothe them, give them proper medical care and education, meet the hundred and one obligations of everyday life, each of which takes money, on $1.25 a day. The owners and growers haven't tried it yet themselves.

Five months a year the great canning plants run full blast. They pay "high" wages—yes, suh. Twenty-two and one-half cents an hour for ten hours a day. Or on piece work, four cents a tray of eighteen cans of tomatoes or six cans of grapefruit. If you keep at it and have had a good deal of experience, if there are no delays in the flow of fruit, a hard, fast worker can pack twenty-five or thirty trays a day.

That's Florida. The citrus industry is the backbone of the economy. That's why the owners are so bitter in their denunciation of California; rivalry is based not on pride in climate, but on anxiety lest California citrus growers beat them out of the markets. The tourist trade also counts. A saying down here goes, "In the summer, the crackers live off yams; in the winter, they live off Yanks." The profit on fruit, like that on Yanks, goes into fewer and fewer hands each year. Little grove owners, like small merchants in the cities, are no longer able to exist. They find themselves laboring in groves no longer theirs, groves owned by large banks, by corporations that control thousands of citrus acres.

And the harder workers sweat in the fields, the less they seem to make. Discontent, restiveness leads to organization. They turn to the more alert of their class to lead them. They were beginning to turn to Frank Norman. More and more workers listened to him. There remained only one thing left to do—so the big owners decided—get Frank

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Norman out of the citrus belt. The Klan was tipped off. They went further than they intended. Today a big man, six feet four, weighing 190 pounds, likes to remember the way he disposed of a "Red."

That Red's wife and child? They live in Lakeland. Most women would be crushed by the tragedy. Mrs. Norman gets relief—$1.20 a week. But Mrs. Norman understands what Frank was driving at, why he paid for his work with his life. Mrs. Norman feels that she has much to live for.

THE Constitution of Florida reads: "White and colored children shall not be taught in the same school, but impartial provision shall be made for both." Further on, "All marriages between a white person and a Negro, or between a white person and a person of Negro descent to the fourth generation inclusive, are hereby forever punishable." It is a crime against the state for a white person to teach Negroes. From his earliest days, the white child is indoctrinated with this deep, unreasoning contempt of the Negro. Thomas Nelson Page, author of that classic of race hatred, *The Negro,* expresses the attitude of the backward South:

> The Negro does not generally believe in the virtue of women.
>
> In the next place, his passion, always his controlling force, is now, since the new teaching, for the white woman.
>
> The urgent need is for Negroes to divide into classes, with character and right conduct as the standard of elevation.
>
> To say that Negroes furnish the great body of rapists, is not to charge that all Negroes are ravishers. To say that they are ignorant and lack the first element of morality, is not to assert that all are so.

Page's ugly conviction of white superiority is echoed by the ruling class throughout the South. The managing editor of The Lakeland Evening Ledger leaned back in his chair, the "kind, southern gentleman," finger-tips together, twinkling eyes surveying me as he explained, "Yes, suh, the one ambition of every nigger is to sleep with a white woman. When they do, they know what to expect. Now, I likes to see niggers get ahead, but you sho' gotta be ca'ful with 'em, else they'd be runnin' the show. That's why we don' let 'em vote, not in the white man's prim'ry. Now, a nigger's got a *legal* right to vote, but just you let one of 'em try it. When a man's 'lected on the prim'ry down here, he's 'lected fo' good. If the nigger's itchin' to vote, he can in the run off, that is if he's seen to it to pay his poll tax—that's a dollar a year and it's got to be paid up fo' two years. We don' want niggers runnin' us—guess we couldn't stand fo' that."

So the Negro is something apart, something lower. Even the liberals reflect this attitude. A man who prided himself on his socially-minded point of view, prodded me with his finger, saying, "Y'know, I ain't got no prej'dice 'gainst the nig—Negroes. I think they're jest's good as we are. Trouble is, they're dirty."

I visited Negro homes—crude crate-like huts, no running water, no electric light, no toilets, no heat, poor ventilation. Water must be hauled from the pump. No paved streets in the Negro district, but dust, thick dust, that the slightest breeze blows into the rickety shacks with their corrugated iron roofs. An old bent woman showed me through one. "Rain leaks in jest like it was outside," she told me. "Dust, ev'ry time the wind kicks up a little, blows into everythin'. People says cullud people ain't clean. Well, I scrubs and scrubs, but the boards ain't no good and scrubbin' doesn't get out the rats 'n the bugs. How's we goin' t'wash decent? And we pays $1.50 a week f'r this. 'N even if we could afford better, we ain't 'lowed to live on'y in this section o' town. My husband, he's got work now, skilled work. He gits $12 a week. I takes in washin'—fifty cents a bundle an' they sho' are some big bundles. But yo' can't live decent in shacks like these—and white folks calls us dirty. I'd like to see some of them live here and see how clean they'd be."

Frank Norman attempted to organize the Negroes, to preach that they too are human and have human wants and needs and the right to life. That is a crime, the most serious of crimes, in the South. Frank Norman paid for that crime with his life.

THREE white men and a Negro squat at the edge of the lake. The moonlight reflected in the water is pale chromium; on the opposite bank are the street lamps against the background of dark houses, the occupants already asleep. Behind, a row of palm trees rustles in the slight breeze.

We whisper together; a swan sails out of the dark, feeds noisily in the patch of water lilies. The three of us who are white shield the Negro from the glare of the occasional passing automobiles. He talks slowly, soft-voiced, looking out at the lake, at the path of moonlight on the water. "He was the fines' white man I ever knowed, Frank No'man was. He was like part of me, part of all of us. He knowed us and he meant what he said. We have so many upsets—when he was takin', was like my own kid dyin'. That was the way all'n us feel."

The bank smells fresh, grassy. "And now?" I asked.

"We's got a hard time organizing. So many upsets for the workin' man. We don' get much chanct fo' organizing, strong like. Cullud folks is afeard. One don' get and never have gotten since we was born, a livin' wage. Our people's unstable like, 'cause they's scared, scared of the fire, scared of the rope. Capitalist organization sho's is strong. But it ain't too long a time till people know what we's comin' to, what is the way we's all gotta go."

He broke off. The swan squawked, made off down the lake. I looked at our companion, watched him roll grass between his fingers. "My kid goes t'school," he said suddenly. "Only learns devilment, that the black man ain't no good. He thinks that right, hears it so much. When I tells him, 'How come you believin' such things?' and I 'splains to him that the Negro's got t' know, he says, 'Well, mebbe. Reckon could yo' get by wit' that without you getten killed?'"

Again he paused, clearing his throat. "Sho'," he added. "Times are we c'n make twelve, fo'teen dollars a week. But we can't live decent. We must lie down and let it rain in yo' face. We should have bathrooms. We try to live decent, but yo' sho' can't do that without finance. I get two dollar a day. I pay $1.35 for a sack of flour, $1.50 fo' rent, twenty-seven cents fo' a pound of meat. All the cheapest—fifty-five cents fo' lard. Cullud people gotta eat heavy food. If it wasn't fo' the fear, we'd all do sumthin', but the fear—we's pow'less now. But if a bridge 'cross a lake get worse 'n worse and you must cross it, pretty soon yo' goin' t'do somethin', fix it. Frank No'man, he knowed. We ain't fo'gotten what Frank No'man say."

He stood up, looking out across the lake. "No," he repeated, his voice low, almost to himself. "We ain't fo'gotten Frank No'man. He was the fines' white man I ever knowed."

"Every revolution was first a thought in one man's mind, and when the same thought occurs to another man, it is the key to that era," said Emerson.

BLANK COLLEGE REVISITED

The college boys go wearily by
  Wearily seducing
The college girls; the college girls
  Drearily refusing

The curriculum conjures chaos up
  Life's gimcrack mystery
Sustains a cardboard hero
  Through pseudo-tragedy

And Prexy is a "Socialist"
  The faculty liberal to a man
Ponder fake problems of the age
  And reap what hope they can

Having turned the lights out all
  These "grope in darkness for salvation"
Lock their own door, then beat the wall
  Come, lovely liquidation

JOSEPH BRIDGES.

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THE SPENDING IS OVER

Russell T. Limbach

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Battle of the Century

EMANUEL EISENBERG

ON August 26 the North American Conference of the New Education Fellowship (subtitled Section of the New Education Association under the Auspices of the Secretary of Public Education) innocently opened a six-day congress in Mexico City in the incredible Italian Renaissance-Roxy building called the Palace of Fine Arts.

Under the heading of "The Arts in the Mexican Schools," Diego Rivera, Mexico's most famous and most prosperous artist, delivered a lecture the second evening on "The Arts and Their Revolutionary Role in Culture" in his usual facile manner, with an erudite reference here and a well-leavened gag there. The customers, almost entirely schoolteachers, were thoroughly contented and nobody thought any more about it. The fantastic demagogy of the Mexican government, which teaches its school children "The Internationale" and circulates the works of Marx and Lenin while crushing strikes and paying fascist bands to break up orderly Communist demonstrations, had been advanced another pace among American leaders of education.

The following afternoon David Alfaro Siqueiros, almost as famous as Rivera but with not a fraction of his prosperity, devoted a similar period to a reading of his already widely circulated analysis of the Mexican muralist movement and the part played in it by Diego Rivera. This analysis is familiar to readers of THE NEW MASSES, where it was published a year and a half ago. Siqueiros had just launched into his specific comments on Rivera when the door theatrically opened and the victim himself unexpectedly entered — large, hippopotamus-like, grinning. Naturally, this was a perfect cue for the orator to intensify his highly effective voice and enter upon improvisations of the printed contents before him.

He had succeeded in developing no more than a handful of his charges when Rivera leaped up out of his seat and screamed that every one of these accusations was answerable and defensible. Here the chairman, José Muñoz Cota, acutely unpopular head of the Department of Fine Arts of the Secretary of Education, stood up to cry that this was no debate; Rivera had had his say yesterday. It was now that Diego, long distinguished as a gun-toter, pulled out his pistol and waved it in the air and announced that he demanded a chance to answer or else——

The schoolteachers were considerably relieved to hear the chairman ask the intruder whether he was ready to suggest an early date for official retort and to hear Rivera offer the following afternoon at four. The pistol was replaced in its holster. Siqueiros was permitted to complete his increasingly fiery talk; and the schoolteachers went on to the third arduous day of their Congress.

BY THE following morning the incident was not only known to all Mexico City, having crashed the front pages of practically all the newspapers in town, but to numerous foreign capitals as well, the cables having done their part nobly. By four o'clock the Palacio de Bellas Artes (Palace of Fine Arts) was jammed with people in the lobby and up and down the stairways: everybody had shown up; countless painters, reporters, art dealers, government employes in the arts, a handful of teachers from the Congress, thirty or forty other Americans, practically all the members of the Section of Plastic Arts of the L.E.A.R. (League of Revolutionary Writers and Artists, the one authentic revolutionary cultural organization in Mexico),[1] and the usual percentage of curiosity hounds. At least a thousand people were there. Something rare was about to happen.

Mexico is probably the only country in the world where a controversial meeting of two painters, in much less than a day's notice, could be calculated to attract a thousand people. In an overwhelmingly illiterate country pictures perform the most immediate communication in the arts, and the tradition carries through to the intellectual world. Mexico is, further, the one place in the world where the bases of a popular public quarrel could be such accusations as false revolutionism, demagogy, chauvinism, tourism and reactionism.

But there were more immediate and specific reasons for the exceptional interest stirred by the quarrel. Since Rivera's expulsion from the Communist Party of Mexico in 1929, he had attempted no public justifications or explanations about his new stand beyond a lying martyrish statement to the bourgeois press that he had been thrown out for Trotskyist convictions. It happens that he was expelled for maintaining an important government post (head of the Department of Fine Arts) while functioning as a member of the Central Committee, openly cooperating with agrarian reformist elements and refusing to sign a petition protesting the government's counter-revolutionary road and its terrorism against the Communist Party. At the John Reed Club in New York in 1932 he did attempt to restate his stand that only the revolution can inspire great art, but with small success. In February of that year, Joseph Freeman published in THE NEW MASSES an analysis of Rivera's career as painter and politician. Rivera maintained a discreet silence for a year and a half, then attacked Freeman in the liberal journals without once referring to the most important accusations which any muralist knew were true. All this happened in New York; in Mexico Rivera never explained himself. And Siqueiros had been attacking him in public since 1931. This was Rivera's first response in four years. Everyone had begun to give up hope of getting a rise out of the smug, prosperous, official national artist.

It is pretty safe to say, therefore, that the crowd had turned up to hear Rivera defend himself and not to listen to the all too familiar attacks of Siqueiros. The crowd and excitement increased. Siqueiros, with his unfailing flair for the theatrical, stood hard against the precise middle of the balcony, giving statements to the press and conferring with a dozen different people. Frightened guards scurried up and down assuring everybody that nothing was going to happen. Nobody budged. At 4:30 Rivera arrived, large and grinning, and joined Siqueiros on the balcony. There was tremendous noise and jittering and it was impossible to tell what was up.

Finally Siqueiros spoke. Not only had the teachers tried to sabotage this tremendously important discussion, said he, but the government officials were attempting the same thing. They offered a small hall that was utterly inadequate. Rivera then announced his contempt for Muñoz Cota, head of this building, and repeated the demand for the largest hall. The crowd booed and howled and insisted. There was a brief and violent flurry of activity in a side office, a confused pause—and then, suddenly, everyone was pouring into the main hall, where plays, opera and dance recitals are given.

SIQUEIROS spoke first. In case his arguments are not known to certain readers, they may be summed up thus: Indoor murals of government buildings are seen only by stenographers; there should be outdoor murals in workers' districts; production has been individualist and not related to the masses, the use of architecture non-functional, non-social, the composition lyrical and mechanical instead of dialectic and scientific, the technique ancient Italian and Egyptian instead of modern mechanical, the content pedagogical, archeological, esthetic, mystical, religious, static, psychologically passive, obscure, dilettantish, fetichistic, opportunistic, counter-revolutionary (the speaker's own string of adjectives). Rivera is the natural fruit of the false ideology of a petty-bourgeois revolution and of the idea that an artist can cooperate with a reaction-

[1] This group, analogous to our former John Reed Club, originated less than two years ago in opposition to the government's Federation of Proletarian Artists and Writers. Its influence has grown slowly and steadily.

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ary government. He was trained in Paris; a chauvinist, never international; idealizes the Indian; his picture of the farmer is vicious; he switched from peasant idealization to worker idealization; he is a saboteur; he never treats such aspects of the current scene as the new rich and Calles but only the past, the vague bad bosses and so on. Even in the United States he used reactionary technique and demagogy. He is an opportunist, a seller-out and a painter for tourists.

Now Rivera rose to say that, if the revolution had been a petty-bourgeois one, how could an artist avoid reflecting it? He and all other painters took orders from the Communist Party in the beginning: then how can their early work not be revolutionary? Is the Party ever wrong? As for working with the government and in bourgeois territories, didn't Lenin counsel boring from within? Religious themes were natural as part of the growth of Mexico; Siqueiros himself had done angels. If frescoes are old style, then why do we use the same materials for houses as they did in the past? Anyway, today we paint on cement. Marx said art should be the result of social conditions, and that's exactly what his and others' murals are. The possibility of effective collective work within government cooperation is amply demonstrated by the painting of the eight artists in the Rodriguez Market; their work is revolutionary. The U.S.S.R. acknowledges him, Rivera, as a real revolutionary because they asked him to do a cover for the magazine Red Field when he was there eight years ago and another magazine printed an article on him and New Mexican Art.

Suddenly, lamely, unexpectedly, the evening ended. Rivera was saying he had been able to do no more than take notes and would have a really full retort ready by tomorrow; and Siqueiros was asking everyone to show up the following day at four in this same place. Slowly and uncertainly, people began to straggle out. What has it all been about? Coming there and getting into the hall had been exciting, but now what?

RIVERA AND SIQUEIROS — *Mendez*

ALTHOUGH the next development was an inevitable one, it was nonetheless startling. Rivera and Siqueiros saw the absurdity of an argument on revolutionary or mass art without the backing of a revolutionary or mass organization. And here colors came clear with strange brilliance. Rivera, with his usual flair for duplicity, had been playing both with the Lovestoneites and the Trotskyites. Now he decided that a series of small meetings working toward the final large meeting should be held in the Casa del Pueblo (Town Hall), the meeting hall of a bakers' union currently relishing a common-law involvement with the Fourth International. Siqueiros, who has been a steady target of criticism for his insistently solitary and non-revolutionary painting for the last few years, suddenly decided that he was a long-standing member of the L.E.A.R. and that this was the organization which should be behind him throughout the remainder of the controversy. It happened that he had visited the L.E.A.R. exactly once in its and his existence. Emotions there were divided between stunned pleasure that he had finally arrived and sharp indignation that he was turning to a group he had practically ignored until then. Still, the majority decision was that the L.E.A.R. had a great deal to gain by sponsoring his stand—and on September 3, a Tuesday evening, enough Trotskyites on one side and enough members of the L.E.A.R. on the other (about 75 altogether) arrived to form a public for the first private discussion of the embattled opponents.

Rivera was entirely on the defensive. He was ready to get to work immediately in trade-union headquarters, said he: but what organization could he ever have joined? what good were Siqueiros' outdoor murals in Los Angeles when the elements had already destroyed them in greater part? Whose fault was it if the Mexican revolution had been a petty-bourgeois one and if imperialism had a strangle-hold over all native culture? Did not Lenin say it took many years to change the masses? Wasn't history mostly to blame? Shouldn't the atmospheric conditions of Mexico be more seriously studied befo any new methods were attempted? Throug all of this Rivera revealed himself as wit out the remotest concept of architectural revolutionary functionalism, a venal oppo tunist, a shameless panderer to fancy and a general wriggling money-grubbir

On Saturday evening of that week drama reared its head to stir the do At that session Siqueiros, playing the ga he has regularly refused to acknowledge game, sought to trick Rivera into signir group of affirmations or "confessions" wi would invalidate any justifications of his or lingering deviations from the true r lutionary line. A mild consternation caused when Marion Greenwood, a yu American painting murals in Mexico Ci asked Siqueiros why he never did any r lutionary work and he answered that penetration of imperialist influence in arts made it impossible for him to live other way than by turning out comme products for the bourgeoisie. This w pretty weird kind of resignation fro who had functioned so long as a profes revolutionary. Another high poin when the opponents were impaled mathematical problem of what percent Rivera's work is sold to tourists an percentage of Siqueiros', the latter tr

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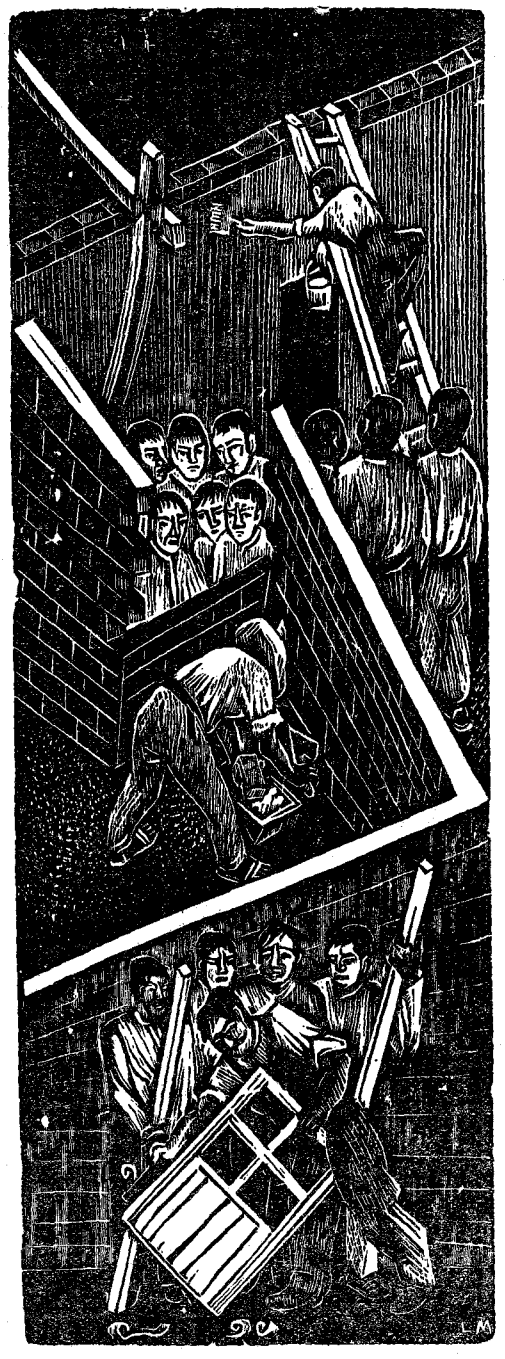
make a cultural-symptomatic point of it, the former a financial-jealous one. With the discussion sunk to such infantile levels, your correspondent, along with half a dozen other impatient people, began to manifest his disgust and boredom by sighs and snorts of incredulity, note-passing and general attitudes of exhaustion. Rivera's wife kept turning to glare, but this seemed in the order of things and went unretorted.

The evening ended and the tiny audience straggled out. I was discussing her question with Marion Greenwood in the entrance-way when Rivera's wife's sister stepped up and said sharply, "What the hell do you want to talk to that mule for? Why don't you come along with us?" Marion was startled and possibly a little worried and moved away. I turned, puzzled. There stood Frida, Mrs. Rivera, her eyes violent. I looked at her in turn, expecting a question. "See a crowd?" she suddenly cried in a high shrill voice—and the back of her hand shot out hard against my mouth. Before I could even react to this extraordinary move she had begun to scream to the group at the bottom of the stairs, so that almost everyone was convinced that the lady had been attacked.

"He's been laughing at me all evening!" she shrieked, "every time I turned my head! These bastard gringos come down from that ——— country for nothing else than to make fun of us here! I'll show him! I'll show him!" Diego (over 250 pounds of him) now came dashing up the stairs to deliver two pudgy blows at my jaw and to cry to his guards for aid. Ten little followers of Trotsky made a prompt circle around us and then decided it was best to cause a separation. They did. Diego was gently forced down the stairs again, along with his wife. There was a moment's general shouting; then Rivera's voice rose firmly above the rest. "Well, I know who he is!" he trumpeted. "A son-of-a-bitch Stalinist! He was flown here by THE NEW MASSES to spy notes and make fun of me. That's who he is!" The band of ten looked up in great curiosity to see what a genuine son-of-a-bitch American Stalinist looked like and then created a path for my exit, holding Diego dramatically back. I left, ingloriously. The members of the L.E.A.R., who swear they would have attempted an immediate defense and counter-attack if they hadn't been too amazed, inform me that they did so later.

BY NOW it was pretty obvious that the final discussion would never take place, it must be confessed that almost everywas relieved. When the Trotsky organ, Libre, appeared with a further reprint of Rivera's arguments in the University lecture, one paid any attention. On October 17 the L.E.A.R., in the face of pooh-poohs and jeerings, opened its studio-school of revolutionary art with eighteen gifted painters and sculptors as collaborator-instructors, seventy artists and students enrolled for free courses, and an active program of experimentation in all forms and materials and day-by-day supply of art to all manner of organizations militating in the united front. A highly deplorable but intensely typical article by Siqueiros appeared the day before in the Mexican Review of Reviews, describing "our" venture and talking in elaborate terms of all the plans of "our" school. It happens that only by indirect speech-making irritation is Siqueiros responsible in any wise for the important move of the L.E.A.R.; his direct contribution was absolutely nil. "Nil" covers even the speech he made at the inaugural session of the studio-school, where, after being asked to say "two words," he devoted about an hour and a half almost exclusively to a continuation of his battle with Rivera, infuriating many of the auditors to pained protest. Siqueiros is listed as one of the instructors in the studio-school, but his announced plans were to leave for New York early in November (two weeks after the school's opening) and stay away from Mexico for about two years.



Mendez

The latest, and probably last, echo of the dying if not dead controversy is an article called Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Art, appearing on October 22 in Todo, a popular weekly. The author is Siqueiros. After pointing out that the controversy released all the waiting forces of reaction in print and speech, he lists seven of the ten confessions signed (before witnesses) by Rivera: 1. that the Mexican muralist movement was utopian in character in its misguided beginnings; 2. that we must revise this radically and find a more powerful way of reaching the masses; 3. that mural painting, far from being the leading means of expression in revolutionary art, is really the exceptional one; 4. that we were misguided in seeking out beautiful but inaccessible interior murals to paint; 5. that we never painted a single agrarian building or a trade-union headquarters or an exterior mural in a workers' district; 6. that we seriously neglected the development of multi-reproducible and easily portable forms of art; 7. that, because of all these errors, the muralist movement has served the interests of official demagogy far more than it served the masses.

The controversy is over. If the whole impetus of the controversy can be attributed (as many here do) to the powerful movement toward a united front among all progressive elements, then it is right to say that Rivera's emergence from the arrogant shell of non-retort constitutes a tribute to this movement —although his actual conduct, and vicious unyielding attacks on the Communist Party and the U.S.S.R., equally demonstrate the hopelessness of winning over any long-standing squatters on the Trotsky soil. The lesson is an important one, for Diego's refusal to cooperate with anybody but his own little gang is now clear to many of the workers he has cried he loves. Then, the L.E.A.R. was precipitated into establishing its long-projected studio-school sooner and more firmly, thus making it the most important and best known organization in Mexico and winning numberless new elements from liberal and humanitarian and hitherto non-revolutionary fields. Finally, Siqueiros has reminded people with fresh intensity that he represents the peak of *caudillaje*[2] of the petty-bourgeois revolution, that his unquestionably brilliant talent has been wasted to *épater le bourgeois* for too many years now, that he has indulged in his own brand of opportunism (mostly through the L.E.A.R.) and is almost completely incapable of joining in any solidly collective work with any continuity. If David Alfaro Siqueiros takes any of these widely accepted revelations to heart and soberly attempts the reform he has counseled to Diego Rivera, the interminable controversy will have helped to gain him, at least, for Mexico's impressive revolution in art.

[2] Independent leadership.

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Correspondence

Minimum Budgets

To The New Masses:

Somewhere in New York City there is a mother and daughter in distress. Both women, Blanche and Muriel Marquis, complained before a Supreme Court referee that they could not keep body and soul together for less than $41,800 a year. The Wall Street broker-husband was apparently trying to chisel on alimony by making his family live within twenty or thirty thousand. In court, Mrs. Marquis, a tenant of the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel-slums, submitted a minimum budget which I contrast with a "fair" minimum budget estimate by the National Industrial Conference Board for a worker's family of three:

	Mrs. Marquis' Budget	*N. I. C. B. Budget for an American worker*
Rent	$9,600	$306.00
Food	4,800	529.36
Clothes	5,000	178.86
Medical care	1,900	30.00
Entertainment	900	4.50
Summer home	3,000	———
Winter in Florida	2,500	———
Miscellaneous	14,100	346.82
	$41,800	$1,395.54

The contrast becomes all the more biting when it is pointed out that the average income of workers has never reached the figure estimated by the N.I.C.B. The unemployed, of course, earn nothing; and those on relief or work projects receive sums which wouldn't keep Mrs. Marquis' dog in comfort.

Harriet M. Wright.

A Round Table on War

To The New Masses:

On the night of Friday, December 13, the Henri Barbusse Memorial Committee will stage an event of vital significance at the Pythian Temple, 135 West 70th Street.

Sir Norman Angell, distinguished recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize and an honorary member of the Presidium of the World Committee Against War and Fascism, will be featured in a public round-table discussion of the subject; "The New Line-Up of Forces for War." Sir Norman will discuss the subject before the audience following his lecture, with leading members of the press, including Charles Angoff, Joseph North, Varian Fry, William F. Dunne, Alfred Bingham and representatives of important newspapers and periodicals, as well as educators, economists, directors of peace organizations and political writers. Dr. Harry F. Ward will serve as chairman.

Sir Norman is of the opinion that the editorial position generally assumed in this country with reference particularly to sanctions misinterprets considerably the true facts. The following letter, quoted in part, addressed by Sir Norman to the Barbussee Committee, is illuminating:

> I wish I could have been in New York for the Anti-War Dinner. Had I been able to confer with the American Committee, I would have urged upon them the advisability of lining up with the forces for peace in Britain and France in active support of measures in restraint of Italy—even if the measures are taken by the League of Nations.
>
> The press here has not quite correctly described the line-up of forces in Europe. It is the imperialists in Britain and the fascists in France who wish to restrain the League in its action against Italy.

Sir Norman will expound this position for his audience at the Pythian Temple. The Henri Barbusse [illegible] to have the an authority of an issue uppermost in the thought of all opponents of war.

Roger Baldwin, Chairman,
Henri Barbusse Memorial Committee.

The Strike at May's

To The New Masses:

The strike in the May's Department Store in Brooklyn, entering its fifth week, is agitating the New York Labor movement. Over 100 strikers came out in answer to a strike call when May's began to fire members of Local 1250. The working conditions in May's are absolutely intolerable. We are fighting against the starvation wage of $10.00 and $12.00 for a 50 and 60-hour week. This wage is lower than that received by most workers on relief projects. We have been compelled to work on Sundays or suffer the loss of a day's pay, or worse, the loss of our jobs. We have been terrorized and intimidated by the ruthless policy of this employer. The May's strike must be won.

The militancy and courage of the strikers has won the widespread admiration of labor for the struggle we are making. Wholesale arrests, reaching a total of 102 have been made, the "conspiracy to interfere with business" charge made against two union organizers and three strikers have hardened us and we are more determined than ever to win this fight. The threat of a conviction on these false charges must arouse organized labor to come to our defense. If this charge is sustained, it will mean the outlawing of all strikes.

We will win this strike if you give us your support. We appeal to you for assistance. Through your Executive Board, through your membership, through your affiliations we appeal for immediate financial aid.

Send all contributions to Leonard Levy, Chairman of Finance Committee, Department Store Employees Union, Local 1250, 265 West 14th Street, New York City. Tel.: CHelsea 2-9652.

Department Store Employees Union.
New York City.

Arizona's Chain Gangs

To The New Masses:

It seems that Georgia is not alone in maintaining its barbarian chain gang system. The Hearst-controlled Arizona Republic has taken to publicizing Arizona's fascist tactics. The following boast appeared in the November 17 issue which was devoted to Arizona resources. The article was printed as an assurance that tourists visiting Phoenix would not be molested by panhandlers, pickpockets, Communists or other undesirables!

> "In Phoenix all prisoners who are physically fit have to work their FULL SENTENCE on the CHAIN GANG! And do the 'Professional Bums' hate THAT? To them work is worse than hangin'!"

I am writing this letter to ask other Arizonians what can be done about it. There is one thing at least that your readers and indeed anyone who believes in freedom and justice can do. And that is to boycott The Arizona Republic and its brother paper The Republic and Gazette.

Pima, Arizona. Herold Lillywhite.

"Shoot to Kill"

To The New Masses:

You may be interested to know that there is a magazine, National Republic which is circulated in school libraries and which reprints your title page of a July issue of New Masses, "Shoot to Kill." Underneath is the title page of a pamphlet issued by the Civil Liberties Union, both put together in such a manner that the idea is very strikingly conveyed that the article "Shoot to Kill" was a call by you for terror on the west coast—in other words that you advocated "shooting to kill" to your readers.

New York. A. R.

A Correction

To The New Masses:

My review of Isidor Schneider's *From the Kingdom of Necessity* in this week's issue of The New Masses credits Dreiser as the author of *Dvoe's Pilgrimage*. As this may surprise some people I should like to comment that *Dvoe* should read *Love* and that a line dropped by the proofreader makes the following sense: "Dreiser in *The Genius* and Upton Sinclair in a badly written but curiously powerful novel, *Love's Pilgrimage* developed the personal conflict of a writer's life."

Josephine Herbst.

Letters in Brief

A member of the Vermont Marble Strike Committee asks New Masses readers for financial assistance in their fight. There are a thousand families to feed and clothe. The strike has helped give birth to the Vermont Farmer Labor Party and has activized the political "atmosphere from somnolence to militancy." Food, clothes, soap and tobacco should go to Edward Brenard, Danby, Vermont; and checks to Gene Pedersen, Rutland, Vermont.

The League of American Writers announces through its chairman, Waldo Frank, that John Chamberlain of The New York Times; Dale Curran, author of *A House on a Street;* and Raymond Guthrie, author and critic, have just been admitted to membership.

In response to the letter by Tessie Tennelle of the League for Southern Labor, appealing for a typewriter, Charles Eskstat has come forth to offer one.

Dr. William Rado thinks Stephen Alexander's article on Van Gogh is the finest analysis of the

Nine leading educators, representing most of the institutions of higher learning in New York City, will give their impressions of the Soviet Union as they saw it during the past year in a meeting at the Washington Irving High School on Monday, December 9. The affair is being sponsored by a committee of students and teachers together with the Friends of the Soviet Union.

Lester Anderson, whose open letter to Consumers' Research we published October 15, reports that he has received a post-card from C. R., "bewailing the delay in getting out their bulletins on account of the strike," and that around the edge of the card was written the following: "There is nothing funnier than a Marxist who believes what he reads in The New Masses, advising liberal democracy. . . . R your charge of absurdity, haven't you heard of Le Russia's defensive affiliation with imperialist Franc Don't hesitate to cancel on C. R.'s account."

The New Film Alliance asks us to state that i urgently needs part time assistants. The secretar is Edward Kern, 110 West 40th Street, telepho PEnnsylvania 6-3239.

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

Caldwell Sees America

SOME AMERICAN PEOPLE, by Erskine Caldwell. Robert M. McBride & Co. $2.

IN some respects this collection of travel sketches and jottings can be called the best book Erskine Caldwell has yet done. The whole work continues more or less on one high level and the finish (the Southern tenant-farmer section) gathers weight to close the volume with a mighty wallop aimed flush at the jaw of industrial and agrarian exploitation.

Now let us examine the book more closely. Mr. Caldwell opens his volume with a blast against the average American traveler's method of traveling, giving out an indictment to the effect that the average traveler (who has the means) either speeds like the whirlwind across his fatherland, or merely views the physical sights such as the Grand Canyon or Niagara Falls, then goes on to the next sight. There is some truth to this statement, but on the whole the indictment is far-fetched. The American, in the main, is a good sound traveler, when he is not rushing across the continent on business. He takes his time (the only time he does), stops off at tourist camps, is friendly and loquacious, prepares food with the assistance of new-found acquaintances, talks politics and business and, in short, gets to know his fellow American. Sometimes people who have met in Ohio or Pennsylvania will pass and re-pass each other on the road the way to California, renewing their ndships and comparing notes as they go ıg. This is no bad way of traveling by any ıeans.

Mr. Caldwell started out from the West Coast and covered the drought area. He tells us tales picked up at gasoline and hot-dog stands, in itself a makeshift way of getting information. We get the feeling of a population being affected by the drought and yet we do not get the feeling of the drought. There is hardly any description of the land at all, ave for a few phrases of its bareness. This reviewer recalls an article he once read about he drought in The Saturday Evening Post two years ago which described the topography of the land, the look of the trees with he blown soil hanging in the branches like lichen, the glare in the sky, the effect of the heat, how much top soil was blown away, how far t blew, how the cattle stood it, the reaction of the farmers' families, etc. In short, the rought was depicted as the drought and beame a dramatic thing, charged with life and eath. In Caldwell's book there is none of .is. It is true Caldwell admits in his foreord that his volume lays no claim of being ı exhaustive study, but nevertheless he is ticized by this reviewer for falling down on the job. Caldwell had only to throw a stick to hit a state farm-school graduate along the road who, in an hour's time, could have given him all kinds of information and data.

This is not to minimize Caldwell's swell job of reporting. When he comes to Detroit he is on firmer ground. He reports the speed-up in the automobile industry, the spy terror and the accidents with harrowing detail; and it is evident to the reader that Caldwell had had some entree to the facts behind the scenes.

And when he comes to his native South, Caldwell is on home soil indeed. Here we get facts and figures and the blazing rage of a man who not only feels for the people but *knows*. Caldwell piles up such a case against the program of exploitation of the sharecropper and wage laborer that this reviewer confesses he has never read anything to beat it. *Tobacco Road's* author's unrelenting honesty and fierce clean prose cut through the layer of lies and false reports like a surgeon's knife. The book closes with a charge against the federal government which has, and is, bungling Southern agrarian relief in such a fashion that whole families and communities have been driven to subsist on the roots of the field and, in some cases, on clay.

The grimness of the volume is relieved at times by several deft sketches in the well-known Caldwell manner, namely, "Grandpa in the Bathtub," "A Country That Moves," "A Badland Tale" and other little stories, any one of which is worth more than a bushel's weight of the type of "introspective" tales turned out by Alvah Bessie, William Saroyan, Whit Burnett and other stooges of The Story Magazine-Arch-deaconess Edward J. O'Brien clique.

Erskine Caldwell, to this reviewer, is one of the few young American writers who seems to be definitely advancing and not just standing still or slipping backward. The fact that he is not an inhabitant of New York stands vastly in his favor. In Manhattan most of the writers for years have never set foot beyond a ten-mile radius, except to pay a visit to a writers' colony or to spend a week-end with a friend on a Connecticut "farm." Many of these writers originally come from the South, the Middle West or the Far West, but they have not gone home for years to see how the home folks have been hit. Their writing, consequently, has flattened out and staled and anything they have to say about their birthplaces is gleaned from the files of newspapers or occasional letters from home. A writer, if he is to amount to anything at all, must return to his people again and again for nourishment, even if he hates or despises them. Failing to do this, he is doomed to rootlessness and creative poverty. Literary history is strewn with the corpses of exiles and expatriates whose works, before they expired (from a creative point of view) thinned down to repetitious water or stopped completely. The letters of Turgenev are recommended to the interested reader, Turgenev, that big lonely hulk of a bachelor who couldn't stand Russia but felt castrated every time he left her soil. His talent and his honesty literally forced him to return to Russia every year or two, and it is noteworthy to recall that after almost

INTERNATIONAL

The Great Tradition

Granville Hicks

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every trip his output received a spurt and another great book was added to the rollcall of the times.

In fine, Erskine Caldwell, by writing *Some American People,* not only has done a good job of reportage but has also set an example to his fellow writers to come out of their Manhattan shells and Connecticut "farms" and to rub shoulders with the people if they are to find out really what it's all about. This goes for the young fledgling poets as well, who have been recently receiving a mild sort of ballyhoo. Poets are writers as well as novelists and to vegetate forever in Manhattan in order to send forth a small annual crop of verses in the hard-guy lingo directed against Wall Street, the cops or the noise of the "L" above Third Avenue, is insufficient. The times are such that in order to write one must have *contact.* Erskine Caldwell, in his new book, demonstrates that he has it.

ALBERT HALPER.

Marxist Literary History

THE GREAT TRADITION, by Granville Hicks. Macmillan Company. $2. Popular Edition, International Publishers, $1.50.

IN AN essay in *The Sacred Wood,* dealing with the work of poets who became critics, Swinburne and Coleridge, for example, T. S. Eliot pointed to their cases as evidence of the sad lot of the poet who had to do what was essentially somebody else's job, that of the perfect critic who happened not to be in sight. The poet had to try to condition the environment, so to speak, to the presence of poetry; he had to be his own critic and was on the way to becoming his own reader and in that way achieving an uncomfortably complete autonomy. Nevertheless, urbanely enough, Eliot gave in other essays definitions of literature perfectly and, apparently contentedly, suited to this situation. In the act of writing the writer's mind, he declares, functions as a catalyst between experience and its expression, affecting and affected by neither. In another of his definitions each new work of art becomes a part of the whole body of literature which is considered to be a separate organism in society having its own order.

What Eliot said then (though he later contradicted it in the subordination of his art to the order of the established church), with his dry eloquence and his air of urbane and leisurely wisdom, made a profound impression and seemed to fix the isolated status of the artist in an immutable natural law. That he had touched nothing basic in his analysis, that he had given no explanation of the corruption of taste, or of the supplanting of poetry by prose fiction, or of the break in the continuity of tradition, or of the general decline of culture, or of the frantic turn most of the arts had taken, was remarked by nobody except a few ignored Marxist critics. Eliot, for all his studious examination of the past, had in effect done nothing more than resurrect some neglected classics, and make them fashionable for a season. He left literature and criticism where they had been before, helpless as that posture was.

Lewis Mumford and other critics, though less fastidious and less sure and discerning in detail turned criticism into more fruitful ground. They included in the sphere of art more than the specific productions of the fine arts, integrating them into what there was of an art of living, and showing how, in everything, adaptation to functions was one of the few certain principles in art. These critics did not go far enough, but in a period when the isolation of the artist was taken for granted and accepted as an ideal, it was a considerable achievement to relocate art in its social place, and to see in its state of health a register of the health of society. Parrington's work extended the implications of this understanding through a broad survey of American culture; while Edmund Wilson, making his approach the concentrated study of the work of masters of bourgeois literature, came closest to the Marxist analysis and brought to it a sensitiveness and discernment, and a freshness and flavor lacking in the few outrightly Marxist critics and indeed in all of the critics of the time.

Another important turn in criticism came with the work of I. A. Richards and C. K. Ogden, who applied the technique of experimental psychology to a study of audience reactions to literature. They showed how the reception of a work of art was conditioned by an almost unfathomable complex of associations and inseparably integrated within the whole content of experience. There were signs in their work, though it was nowhere explicit, of an awareness that this experience differed in some of its elements for different classes. In showing how inextricably the experince of art was bound up with the whole of social experience, Richards and Ogden, though they stopped short with that, made a valuable contribution to contemporary criticism.

The loudest dissenters to these developments of sociological criticism were the Humanists. Doctrinaire where Eliot was tentative, they held for an unconditional return to the classical tradition, consenting to abandon most of the classics on the way. Their interpretation of the classical tradition would have ironic laughter from the creators of classical literature. In effect they advocated an arrest and stratification of life. They saw the chaos of life under capitalism, laid the blame for it chiefly on the cries of its victims and the protests of their sympathizers, and called for its corrective in individual self-discipline, not in a reordering society. They wrote with an irritating af tion of moral superiority although, in sp of their emphasis upon decorum, their trance upon the scene was the worst ma nered episode in recent literary controvers But their bad manners were symptomati It was soon apparent that they were speak ing for the upper-class reaction, that thei haughtiness and venom was a sign of th upper-class consciousness of the class war.

But in the general run of reviewing none of these tendencies was assimilated. The function of criticism remained for most reviewers simply the recognition of "art," a process which was assumed to be a special cultivation of the senses, like coffee-tasting. The recognition was done in evaporating language; no more than the news that the recognition had been made was recorded. Like Elinor Glyn's "It," with or without which a movie queen was or was not, art was indescribable, though the critic might tell you where to go to make your own attempts upon its subtlety.

For all practical purposes, the accepted attitude toward literature was that it was a world by itself. Let it alone. If it was anarchic, so was the rest of the world. America was used to the coexistence of other worlds. It had the flourishing underworld of the racketeers. On Wall Street, a system that had no relation to practical economics

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an independent existence. The extreme rance of cynicism, which was the ruling od of the time, was extended to literature. d at that juncture, in 1929, the storm of e depression broke.

In time it became apparent that what had ome upon the capitalist system was not a nere fatigue lapse like previous crises. This was a definite and permanent enfeeblement, n advanced stage in the endemic disease of the capitalist system. All elements in the social system were forced to make an examination of their condition and their prospects, and no more than one clear glance sufficed to clear away some old illusions. One of the first to go, in literature, was the idea of the isolation of art, and along with it the absurd notion of the permanent childhood of the artist, who needed a guardian and who, once the guardianship of the patronage system had been withdrawn, had been condemned to be a starveling babe in the wood. Now, for the first time, the problem of the artist and his place in society was realistically approached and it led inevitably to the rise of a Marxist literature and a Marxist criticism.

In a professional sense, Marxist criticism was slower to develop than Marxist literature. Criticism must have a body of literature to deal with before it can make analyses and deduce principles. That Granville Hicks was the first Marxist critic to command authority and remains our most complete critic, is due to the fact that he not only used the Marxist method upon the uncertain flood of the publishing season's output, but he applied organically material that was not only the closest at hand, but the most relevant to immediate success, the history of American literature. This constitutes the importance of Hicks' major work, *The Great Tradition,* now issued in a new edition with an added chapter covering recent American proletarian literature. Curiously enough, on its first publication its importance was less feelingly acknowledged in the radical and liberal press than in the academic press where the reviewers, after hurrying out announcements of their disagreement, accorded due recognition to its uniqueness, its significance in its field and its thoroughness.

Specifically, *The Great Tradition* is a study of American literature since the Civil War. These were its major years from the point of view of fruitfulness and its most critical years from the point of view of its destiny in American society. Within these years America grew into the world's greatest capitalist nation and in the arrogance justified by this tremendous advance, capitalist values overshadowed all other values. Cultural values could compete only feebly against them, since they conquered, in the end, even the most rooted system of values in American life, those of colonial puritanism. Culture lacked, in America, the tradition, the continuity and the institutionalized order which gave it greater powers of resistance in Europe. The course of literature, therefore, since the Civil War, when the forces of industrialism were released, has been an ordeal, and its most consistent type of expression has been that of protest.

So seen, certain phenomena in American literary history at last become explicable. Why was it that so many great American writers are only half-fulfilled in their work, or successful only in restricted fields, or wasted in escapes into the past, or in romantic nowheres, like streams drying up in deserts? Why did promising movements like the regional literature end up in trivial exploitation of the picturesque? We can understand in Hicks' analyses why the potential great satirist in Mark Twain never matured; why Melville fell into obscurities and ended in silence; why Bret Harte wrote his fading memories of the Old West, according to formula, from a London refuge; why Lafcadio Hearn ran away to Japan.

The life produced by capitalism in America was nothing to celebrate and the influence of literature in it, or of culture in general, was small. In some writers it evoked a morbid disgust which drove them into exile; others it sent back for subject matter to the American Past which took on a nostalgic glamor; others it corrupted. Where the life was faced it was generally in satire, or muckraking. No sensitive man could approve of life in this era or look for heroes in it. Disapproval in fact came to be regarded as the normal attitude for writers, forgetting that, in the past, writers had had considerable admiration for their characters, whereas the characters in American fiction are mostly portraits of failures, pitied or scorned by their authors. The one great subject, however, that this life afforded, that could have provided heroes without stint and heroic struggle was, in its actual terms, evaded. This was the class struggle. The class struggle out of which are born all the social realities of life was avoided with more fear and reticence than the organs of physical birth. And because it evaded this main issue, American literature has had a stunted growth.

It is this record that Hicks gives, and the fruitfulness of the Marxian analysis is indicated in the coherence of the record as a whole and in its penetration in detail. No other presentation of American literature equals it in comprehensiveness and concreteness. It leaves conjecturable and immeasurable factors out. Spirits and souls do not occur in its terms. It provides a solid base for advancing Marxian criticism.

In spite of the comprehensiveness of Hicks' analysis, he seems to me to have omitted one very important factor. Literature as a commodity in a profit system was strongly affected. In the first place, the bulk of it, the greatest part of the reading matter produced for public consumption was directly and immediately corrupted and the significance of this needs stressing, for it has been an im-

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portant factor on the one hand in hastening the decay of the more vulnerable writers and in intensifying the sense of isolation of the rest. The vast majority of the American reading public was captured by the popular periodical press, subsidized by big business through advertising and edited accordingly. The majority of the writers, many of them of considerable talent, were drawn into the job of providing the reading matter for the space between the ads. The reading public was corrupted, but the writers were perhaps even more corrupted since they became the experts in corruption. Apart from more obvious factors in the degeneration of these writers was the imposition of the only labor saving device yet known in literary production, haste; and the hurry, superficiality and leveling out imposed by this speedup practically completed the demoralization of the writers subjected to it. Book publishing survived, almost by sufferance, because it came to serve a necessary function. Its prestige, raised by the obvious low quality of the outrightly commercial literary products, provided a mechanism for developing new reputations and new styles. A portion of literature was thus allowed to survive as a fine art, to serve, so to speak, as the designing department for the reading industry. There is no space here to go into the many interrelationships of popular reading and what is left with the name of "literature"; but the subject, apart from the significance it has in itself, so pursued would yield, I believe, many fresh and revealing clues to the solution of the problems Hicks is pursuing.

In another respect, *The Great Tradition* needs a little qualification. The positive element, the element of appreciation, is weak. This is of course due to Hicks' purpose. The book is, essentially, a clinical examination rather than a museum visit or even a job of essay. Hicks set out to determine what was wrong with American literature and the negative elements would necessarily predominate in such a research—especially since Hicks has performed his task so ably as to make the negative factors clearer and more boldly outlined than ever before. By this I do not mean that Hicks' judgments are deliberately weighted. On the contrary, they are amazingly balanced and sound. I can hardly think of one writer among the hundreds discussed who suffers an injustice in Hicks' estimates. But the accent is, as in such a study it has to be, on the negative element. The result is that writers who, in any totalling up of resources, would belong to the revolutionary movement, and works upon which proletarian literature could base itself as a tradition, seem to be left outside. At the moment Walt Whitman occurs to me and Melville's *White Jacket* in which the exploitation of American seamen is passionately dealt with, though truly enough, without an understanding of the class-conflict implications. This factor lessens somewhat the great usefulness of the book. Perhaps, in one of the reprintings that *The Great Tradition* is certain to have, a summarizing chapter, making an accounting of the existing riches of American revolutionary literature, could be added. ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

Thought—Ruled or Ruling?

MOODS, PHILOSOPHICAL AND EMOTIONAL, by Theodore Dreiser. Simon and Schuster. $3.

TO THOSE who regard Theodore Dreiser as one of the important writers of our time, a reading of this last collection of his poems is a moving experience. But not altogether a happy one. For these 250 prose poems are very much like notations from a diary. They are, on the whole, autobiographical. More than that, they express, with Dreiserian courage and honesty, the struggles, hopes, defeats, confusions and bitter loneliness of one who, in pain and ill health, is passing like a seeker through the dark continent of his own mind.

Although it would be absurd to consider Dreiser as a lyricist, many of his nature poems, as anyone familiar with certain of his prose descriptions might expect, are, for their factual, unadorned imagery, exceptionally fine: "Arizona," for instance; "Dakota Evening" and the exquisite concluding lines of "Evening—Mountains." But, like other writers of his generation, he is chiefly concerned with the "foredoomed struggle of the ego for self-realization." With the gestures—though not the embracing conceptions—of Whitman and with a Teutonic emotional fist, Dreiser strikes out at this "cruel world." What he does not strike at are the things that make the world cruel, the socio-economic forces that foredoom the ego's struggle. It is a rather strange paradox to find the author of *Jennie Gerhardt,* the champion of "the uncultured and their woes," now writing

As I grew
I tried to help men,
Contemplating with pain
The fallen,
The tortured,
The hopeless.
I spoke for them,
Wrote of them,
Formed a band
That sought to change by force
Or opposition
The greed
And vanity of others,
Whom I believed
Enchained them.

But I was wrong.
Not others—
Not themselves—
But life—
Life!—
Was their cruel master—
The great force
That makes beggars
Of us all.

. . . .

I now have learned
That thought—
The thoughts of men themselves—
Their moods—
Not those of other men
Make men,
And drive them.

Why, we ask, should not a man of Dreiser's compassion and sensibilities look more closely into the matter and say: but just what is it that makes men think as they do? If the "thoughts" of men have driven and destroyed them, why not try to direct these thoughts toward the achievement of a freer and better life? And why, Theodore Dreiser—why have you chosen to escape into a kind of pseudo-mysticism that extols the "matter-energy" of working-class boys and girls, but at the same time finds no direction for it; that sees men and women whose lives are ruled by a factory whistle, but can discover no other hope for them? Is it good logic to imply that such living conditions are the result of "moods of the creator"?

Dreiser himself gives us the answer—at least part of the answer—in some of these poems. Like D. H. Lawrence in the years just before his death, Dreiser is confronted with the battle between the desperate desire of the ego to survive and the disintegration of the flesh that houses it. His is the cry of a lover of life: the beauty of sea and star and

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duty of women, the "lighted chambers of mirth and pleasure" that must be left behind. If we compare Dreiser's "The Great Blossom" with Lawrence's "Gentians," and the latter's "Ship of Death" with certain of Dreiser's last poems, we can see the same weariness of life, the same desire for solitude, to get away from the problems of men and women that—once vitally interesting—now seem to matter little in the brief moments left:

> Yet shall I leave you in silence, wearied;
> I shall go out into the wondrous open;
> I shall lay me in my green chamber and rest.

Perhaps we are not too young, too impatient for change, to understand that, Theodore Dreiser. And yet you go on to say, in another poem,

> Not by my will
> But my pity,
> Am I chained

and, in "Confession" (the Priest may be hidden, but we know his name),

> I confess
> And freely
> That I am guilty of the greatest of crimes—
> Sympathy;
> And that I have failed
> Because I lacked the courage
> To be cruel.

In the social lexicon, ignorance is perhaps the greatest crime. Mr. Dreiser is not ignorant. But sentimentality is a close runner-up: it is Dreiser the sentimentalist—not the sympathizer—who has failed. Bedewed with the tears of self-pity, he has lost a poet's greatest gift: the courage to say the truth.

RUTH LECHLITNER.

Hull House Reconsidered

JANE ADDAMS, by James Weber Linn. D. Appleton-Century Company. $3.50.
JANE ADDAMS OF HULL HOUSE, by Winifred E. Wise. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.50.

IN THE preface to *Jane Addams* her nephew James Weber Linn writes: "This book is intended to be not so much an interpretation of Jane Addams as the story of her life," and Winifred Wise, in her biography for "young people," claims no deeper purpose. Both authors indeed tell an interesting story of this girl who fulfilled a childish determination to live in "a big house right in the midst of horrid little houses." But it is an interpretation of Hull House, the forerunner of the settlement movement in America, that is of greater significance today and these two books present a broad enough picture to make possible an estimate of the aims, accomplishments and limitations of Miss Addams' social experiment. She herself described it, in 1892, as the work of "educated young people" who were "longing to socialize their democracy" by sharing their cultural advantages with the underprivileged masses. More specifically, her aims, as stated in the Hull House charter, were: "To provide a center for a higher civic and social life; to institute and maintain educational and philanthropic enterprises and to investigate and improve the conditions in the industrial districts of Chicago."

Obviously, this improvement of the industrial conditions was essential before the people could enjoy the richer cultural opportunities which Hull House provided. While Miss Addams realized this, she believed that trade-union recognition and labor legislation were sufficiently effective methods for insuring the just treatment of workers. Her wish for capital and labor to cooperate was consistent with "her instinctive reaction from, rather than movement toward, any class conception of society. . . . Though she 'conscientiously made her effort' . . . to accept socialism, she could not agree with anything 'baldly dependent on the theory of class-consciousness.'" Thus while she praised the unions for their efforts through "legal enactment to satisfy the desire, not only for social order, but for social righteousness," she condemned strikes as wasteful, violent and warlike. Then when an anti-sweatshop law was declared unconstitutional in part and for the rest unenforced, she decided the law had been premature, ineffective because "not preceded by full discussion and understanding." Her solution was the broader education of the people that they might demand the law's enforcement and she gave no thought to the power of industrialists and legislators.

In actuality, then, it seems that the settlement movement, for all its sympathy with the workers, has offered them only palliatives. Refusing to admit that labor legislation and union recognition, even when won, are not enough. It does not encourage laborers to use more forceful means to better their conditions and certainly it does not urge them to seize control of the whole industrial process. No, instead it holds classes in home economics, dramatics and literature. Miss Addams and the many "educated young people" who have carried on her work have generously shared their cultural advantages with the underprivileged, but the settlement movement has not and will not help them to win real economic freedom.

E. H. NIELSON.

Brief Review

THE COMPLETE WORKS AND LETTERS OF CHARLES LAMB. (Modern Library. Giants Series. 1152 pages. $1.) The "charming" Lamb is one of the brightest products of bourgeois England. He was the son of a servant; but his father happened to serve an influential and grateful gentleman who provided for young Lamb's education. A faint air of snobbery is to be found in much of Lamb's writing. At one point he declares his regrets that the audience for literature consisted of "tailors, weavers—and what not." His writing, however, is always shrewd, amiable and charmingly turned, and worth rereading, and this volume, as complete as a one-volume edition could be (*The Tales* from Shakespeare are omitted)—is well worth reading.

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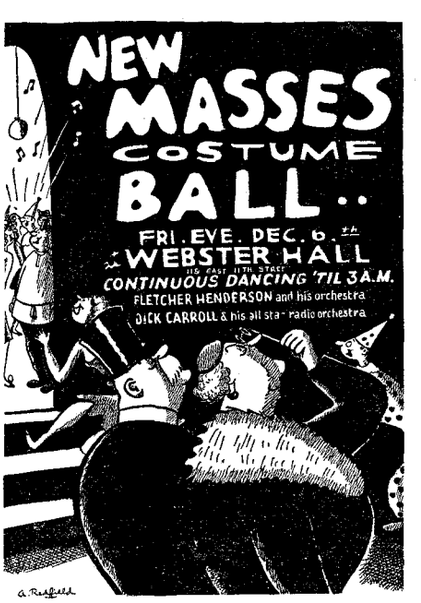

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The Dance

Five Dancers in Fourteen New Works

RARELY has one found more variety, freshness and stimulation than in the opening concerts of the current dance season. Rarely has the space available for discussion seemed so confining—which in itself is indicative. For too often a weekly-magazine reviewer feels a futility in writing about recitals which are performed only once. By the time his review appears the subject is past history, and unless something genuinely important is involved, he finds himself in the academic business of cataloguing forgotten ephemera. It would be a dreary audience indeed that could forget the latest recitals by Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey, Charles Weidman, Tamiris and Esther Junger. The very construction of their programs showed welcome contrasts in intention. Graham added two widely different items to her repertoire; Humphrey and Weidman gave over an entire evening to two new group compositions; Tamiris divided her program between individual and group numbers; and Junger presented twelve solos, eight for the first time. Fortunately for dance devotees who missed these concerts, Graham, Humphrey, Weidman, Tamiris and their groups will soon appear at a gala recital under the auspices of the International Labor Defense (December 15, Carnegie Hall).

We have not seen the program but we hope it will surely contain Martha Graham's new work, *Imperial Gesture,* for if any dance deserves a tremendous audience it is this stunning picture of imperialist greed. Reducing the sequence to its basic truth, Graham presents the story through a single figure of arrogance. In its avidity for seizure, the figure spreads wide like a giant bird, stamps upon its prey and gathers more and more, until finally bulging with deformity, it collapses under the burden of gluttony. If thus summarized in barest terms *Imperial Gesture* reads like a primer in economics, it must be made clear that this dance is a realized work of art. And it is this organic fusion which fills it with immediacy and conviction. For Graham is not parroting Marxism; she is illuminat[illegible] by her art one of the central facts [illegible] ontemporary civilization—and with [illegible] bi[illegible] clarity that cannot be forgotten.

[illegible]r other new work, *Formal Dance,* is [illegible]rly different in aim and effect. Removed [illegible]om any idea beyond the idea of craft, it is a study in patterns, and as such considerably less interesting that *Sarabande,* for instance, with its cold-lit exquisiteness of costume and movement. For sheer design and mood-color, however, *Frontier* is probably Graham's richest work. By its costume, beautiful setting (by Isamu Noguchi) and the similarity of its music to that of *American Provincials,* it is clearly a recreation in American backgrounds. But where *American Provincials* ("Act of Piety" and "Act of Judgment") takes on the effect of critical realism, *Frontier* is built on serenity. Its vagueness deprives it of much latent power—which is true of neither *Course* nor *Celebration.* Though similarly unclarified, these group dances are flooded with energy, continuous excitement and the fluent rhythms of a living frieze.

Most provocative of all the new works was Humphrey's *New Dance,* for which she supplied an abstract:

> It begins for two dancers with an outpouring of energy, scattered and spasmodic . . . spontaneously developed in group form [and finally summed up when] two dancers slowly integrate the entire group and come to a climax in the celebration of this conscious group movement. . . .

Whether the three themes discovered out of the prelude are abstract designs or specific ideas Humphrey does not say; but this observer found more than fugitive suggestions of a sociological architecture. Much of the choreography concealed itself in vagueness and certain religious, domestic and labor motifs appeared to be self-cancelling. But one theme was glitteringly clear: four men beating out a solid pattern in the movements of manual workers, and geared to the sounds of an industrial tom-tom. And another theme, developed finally into a mass of upraised arms, suggested that the "conscious group movement" derived from social consciousness. The professional haters-of-ideas-in-the-dance may call these speculations wishful; but it is doubtful that Humphrey would devote a major work and Wallingford Riegger's striking score to a mere string of abstractions. Even after one seeing one can say that *New Dance* carries a social burden under its load of vagueness—perhaps the intention of the choreographer notwithstanding. Dancers no less than poets may utter truths the meaning of which they themselves are unaware. In this case, however, greater awareness would add no end of richness and artistic power.

Following *New Dance,* Charles Weidman's *American Saga* fell across the house like a burst of light. To Jerome Moross's bubbling music Jose Limon (Bunyan), Williams Matons (the Big Swede) and Charles

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Weidman (Johnny Inkslinger) expertly enacted episodes in the career of Paul Bunyan. Some ingenious lighting effects on a translucent yellow screen and a forest of expressionistic trees contribute to the giddy gayness of this folk-ballet spun out of Stephen's legend of the "mighty logger, the inventor of the lumber industry." The work may be a bit long, it may lack the penetration found in other Weidman comics; but within its limits there is much sly humor and broad, ruddy laughter—and a powerful suggestion of an unmined treasury of folk-material for the American dance.

It is scarcely necessary here to discuss Tamiris' program in detail since her work is well known to left-wing audiences. *Flight* and *Escape* are continually popular; *Individual and Mass* always provokes loud applause. But one doubts that her new three-part *Harvest 1935* deserves such response. *Middle Ground,* depending wholly on red and white costume patches, lacks both truth and wit in its [illegible] simplification. *Maneuvers,* an enter[illegible]hough travesty on the military goose-[illegible] is shrivelled in meaning by an[illegible]istic overtones. Once again it seems Tamiris does her best work with groups. *[illegible]ong of the Open Road* (from her Walt Whitman cycle) has an ebullience and richness missing in her solos which at times enjoy a simplicity derived from obviousness.

Esther Junger was last seen in the Sklar-Peters-Theater Guild *Parade* which by no means showed her to advantage, judging from her latest recital. An admirable clarity and precision of movement heighten her compositions, which for the most part are etched in lean patterns. A dancer of hard energy, she does not attempt to simulate languor or primitivism . . . neither is there passion in her work (it reminds one of a Sheeler painting). Part of the explanation lies in her program: a catalog of minutiæ demanding only fragments of intensity. If the consequent dullness is extrinsic with her, if it is symptomatic of an emotional tide waiting to be unleashed, she will not need to go very far to find the necessary stimulation. STANLEY BURNSHAW.

Current Theater

Let Freedom Ring. **Closed November 30, after a** run of three and a half weeks—let this be restated here to the shame of the scores of thousands of theater-goers in this city whose very own play this was, and whose failure to support it by any of the dozen easy means at their disposal is directly responsible for the play's closing. Not only has one of the most moving dramas in the history of the social theater now ceased to register its message, not only has one of the most colorful and passionately true stories of contemporary society been muted, but a blow has been struck at the daring and confidence of the left-wing theater, which perhaps may bring new obstacles to be overcome. *Let Freedom Ring* has closed but it can be revived. And we urge any sincere and financially equipped believer in it and in its philosophy to seize this opportunity to resurrect one of the worthiest social dramas from an undeserved grave. THE NEW MASSES can promise such a person vigilant and impassioned support.

Mother (Civic Repertory Theater). Based upon the original play by Bert Brecht with music by Hanns Eisler, the Theater Union's production introduces variations of its own, causing a mixture of styles. And yet *Mother* contains a few of the most thrilling scenes ever produced—and most of the songs, despite their lack as English verse sing their way into your heart and brain. *Mother* is a "must" play not only because of its experimental interest (it exemplifies Brecht's theory of the "epic" theater), but for its disarming clarity, its memorableness, its power.

Squaring the Circle (Adelphi Theater). An adaptation of Katayev's famous comedy of Soviet self-criticism, with some good interpolations and some very offensive ones. The version now running is a considerable improvement over the first. Acted with warmth and delight, it should charm friends of the U.S.S.R., it should even warm "neutral" hearts.

Dead End (Belasco Theater). What happens terms of social conduct when poverty-crushed dwe[illegible]ers in verminous flats see all day and night the luxurious life of their next door neighbors? What happens when Millionaire Row and Rat and-Louse Alley share the same block? Sidney Kingsley's pla[illegible] on this theme is an impressive work of document[illegible]tion; Norman Bel Geddes' set a prodigy of ph[illegible]graphic realism; the performances by the gang youngsters piercingly real.

At Home Abroad (Winter Garden). The curre[illegible] musical revue hit, practically nothing to do wi[illegible] anything, least of all the title. Beatrice Lille's song and words are often funny, Eleanor Powell's tap dancing is just incredible. A great improveme[illegible] over *The Great Waltz,* last year's musical (bo[illegible] office) triumph.

Jumbo (Hippodrome). Lifts you up with a ma[illegible]nificent sweep of imagination one minute and plo[illegible] you down on a bum joke the next. Tuneful, raucou[illegible] merry, hollow, gorgeous and glittering as a soa[illegible] bubble. Terrible book by Hecht and MacArthu[illegible] nothing very stirring from Jimmy Durante; but [illegible] incredibly beautiful horse (Dr. Ostermeier's); a[illegible] on the whole the swellest entertainment in town f[illegible] kids (best after *The New Gulliver*).

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"So Red the Rose"

ROBERT FORSYTHE

I HOPE it will not be necessary for me to speak sharply again to Mr. Stark Young on the matter of propaganda. As dramatic reviewer for The New Republic, Mr. Young stands in the forefront of critics who feel that only the aesthetic principles of art have any reason for existence. A significant indication that he was leading a Jekyll and Hyde life was given last year with the appearance of his successful novel, *So Red the Rose*. If after that there were still doubts of Mr. Young's true feelings, they have been dispelled by that fluoroscopic industry known as the movies, which has looked entirely through Mr. Young's novel and revealed the propagandistic skeleton beneath.

From recent remarks by Mr. Young in the press, it is plain that the version unreeled last week at the Paramount Theater has his warm approval. Just how the acting could have pleased him is not clear to me, for it is of the characteristically maudlin type which accompanies all movies hinting of honeysuckle, but he may have found it entirely true to the spirit of the South. I don't believe my own prejudice in the matter is anything but normal. It is not that the action necessarily belongs to the South, but that it has that curiously unreal and soggy quality which makes the spectator shift uneasily in his seat in embarrassment. The production is wholly in that key and Margaret Sullavan helps not at all by a performance which will affect the chances of the South gravely in the event of a future Fort Sumter.

But neither the acting nor the direction can hide the pure propagandistic intent of Mr. Young's work. If it will assist him in believing that I am trying to be fair in my estimate, I will say that the movie version of *So Red the Rose* parallels very closely the worst Russian pictures of the embattled middle period of Soviet film history. Since he has railed bitterly at such pictures and plays, it is a source of some poetic satisfaction to point out that when he is touched by a theme —as he is by the nobility of pre-bellum Mississippi—he becomes as ardent a champion as any other artist who considers heart and common sense more important than technique. My objections to the particular propaganda disseminated by Mr. Young are profound, but it would be as senseless for me to say that he is a bad artist because he happens to admire the pre-war South as it is for him to insist that there is such a thing as pure art. It is hardly likely that a descendant of General Grant or indeed any Northern person who feels that the cause of the Union in the Civil War was just and heaven-ordained will agree that the picture of the War, as revealed in *So Red the Rose,* is anything but one-sided and prejudiced.

Quite briefly, the film has to do with a Southern family which lives at Portobello, the "finest plantation in Mississippi." When the war breaks out, Edward, the son, goes and is killed. Duncan, a cousin and the beloved of Valette, the daughter, refuses to go at first because he thinks it wrong for Americans to kill one another. After Edward's death, he enlists. The father also enlists, coming home to die at a time when the Northern Army is close and the slaves feel that freedom awaits them at last. With the exception of William Veal, the Negro house servant, who obviously embodies for Mr. Young the loyalty which a slave must naturally feel for a master, the Negroes go on strike, steal the pigs and chickens and talk of taking over the plantation. Valette (Margaret Sullavan) cures all that by first slapping the face of one of the slaves and appealing to the heart of the ring-leader ("Do you remember the time, Cato, when I fell and broke my arm and you carried me home? . . . My little broken wing, you called it. . . .") Cato hangs his head, a tear comes to his eye and the Negroes march back to the house, led by Valette and her little brother Middleton, singing the old spirituals they love so well. Arriving there, they find that the master has died and they are being given their freedom by the heart-broken widow. Later the Northern troops burn down the manor house and the family is finally found in a cottage, with Valette, in a Bergdorf-Goodman gown, working in the fields. The Union soldiers are represented as extremely uncouth gentlemen and I am curious to know how the circumstance will be received by whatever happens to be the northern equivalent of the United Daughters of the Confederacy.

The chances for taking sides in a plot such as this should be evident even from this sketchy outline, and it is sufficient to say that neither Mr. Young nor his cinematic confreres have overlooked their opportunity. One need only imagine the same story told through the character of Cato, the Negro, to realize not only how different the interpretation would be, but what a myth Absolute Truth is. I have reflected elsewhere upon the ambition of artists and critics to act as God. They seem everlastingly obsessed by the notion that what they observe and set down is the ultimate on the subject. As a matter of plain fact, there is no such thing as the truth. Stark Young and Langston Hughes, equally sincere and fine artists, would have utterly different things to say about pre-war Mississippi even if they used the same body of facts for their material. So long as authors are human beings, this will always be true. I have known Napoleon worshippers who have felt indignant at the picture drawn of the great Emperor by Tolstoi in *War and Peace,* which is the greatest of all novels. As a critic, Stark Young may plead for impartiality; as an author, he becomes a man with a point-of-view.

This is considering propaganda in its current and wider sense as a statement of a viewpoint. Even if regarded strictly from its definition as a form of proselytizing, as a means of furthering a cause, Mr. Young does

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not come off unscathed. To anyone who knows the southern agrarian movement, it is plain that *So Red the Rose* is almost a text-book for the idea. In its insistence on the sweetness of the old life, it offers support for the notion that time can turn backward and restore the good era when the masters were fine flowers of a delicate and beautiful civilization. The fact that the civilization was based upon slavery and that in no event can feudalism be reestablished at this late day, would not alter the situation from Mr. Young's viewpoint. He does not want to know how it can be accomplished; he wants to go back there as speedily as possible.

Whether Mr. Young would concede the point is debatable but our propaganda is almost identical with his. We fight for a better life, just as he does. Admittedly, there was nothing more delightful and desirable than the old life of the South, for those who were in a position to enjoy it. We should all like to have it and indeed *could* have it under a sensible form of civilization. Since, therefore, our goal is the same and it is apparent to the most modest student of history that civilizations can never be restored, we should like to enlist Mr. Young in our campaign. We can assure him that no matter how long it takes, we shall reach our destination long before he will approach it on the road he is now traveling. In fact, he will never reach it. As a pure sporting proposition, there is no contest between the two methods. Only once in a lifetime does a sure thing like that come along.

Between Ourselves

THE second half of Bruce Minton's revelations about conditions in Florida will appear in next week's issue (which is the 48-page Anti-Fascist Number). The article includes an interview with Fred Bass, Kleagle of the Orlando (Fla.) Klan and Chairman of the Americanization Committee of the American Legion, and a talk with the federal relief director who stated that there are 65,000 unemployed eligible for work relief and funds for only 35,000. The article exposes the labor-smashing tactics of the Klan and its ally, the local federal authorities.

"John Reed in Czarist Russia," the third chapter of the series of five we are publishing from Granville Hicks' forthcoming biography of John Reed, will appear next week.

John L. Spivak's article in this issue came by cable from Warsaw, Poland, where he went immediately on emerging from Nazi Germany. We had intended to begin Spivak's series with his dispatches from Italy, where he went first, but the interview with Herr Lewald on the Olympics controversy required immediate publication. Spivak's next article, "La Madama Smiles" reads like a detective story. He penetrated to the heart of the Fascist judicial-terrorist system, the office of the president of the Special Tribunal. Spivak is Spivak in any language; when he hurls questions at them they hop around in considerable agitation.

Nancy Bedford-Jones, who wrote "My Father Is a Liar" for us last September, has just been married to Joseph P. Lash, National Secretary of the Student League for Industrial Democracy. Miss Jones has been arrested twice recently in Los Angeles in free-speech fights.

Pauline Brickman, 2313 East 23rd Street, Brooklyn, informs us that she has about 100 copies of THE NEW MASSES, going back into the days of the monthly magazine, which she would be glad to donate to a club or organization that would keep them on file.

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